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CAMPING

IN THE

MUSKOKA REGION.

ON NORTH RIVER.

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CAMPING

IN THE

MUSKOKA REGION.

BY

JAMES DICKSON, P.L.S.

Under the greenwood tree,
Who loves to lie with me,
And turn his merry note
Unto the sweet bird's throat.
Come hither, come hither, come hither:
Here shall he see
No enemy,
But winter and rough weather.

As You Like It. Act II. Scene V.

TORONTO;
C. BLACKETT ROBINSON,
1886.

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CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

IN these days of steamboats, railroads, tourists and newspaper correspondents, one would think that there ought to be few spots now in this Ontario of ours a *terra incognita;* few spots which either the pen of the traveller has not described or the pencil of the artist illustrated and brought vividly before the mind's eye of those who have not had the opportunity of seeing for themselves. Still there are many grand scenes of lake and river, of mountain and valley, of wimpling burn and brawling brook, of lovely forest glade and fern-fringed dell, that have neither been described nor illustrated. The pen and pencil of a Butler have vividly depicted the Great Lone Land and the Wild North Land. The pen and pencil of a Grant, a Cheadle, a Milton and a Pellesier have embellished and brought to every fireside the snow-capped summits of the Rocky Mountains, the dark cañons and lonely valleys of the Fraser and the Thompson Rivers. The newspaper correspondent and the artist have followed in the train of a Governor-General across that large extent of country, our great North-West, and painted in glowing colours its fertile plains and majestic rivers, and prophesied the great future in store for it. Other writers and artists have accompanied another

Viceroy across the continent, and published the grandeur of the Pacific slope. Gentlemen of the same ilk have followed the railroad engineers up the valley of the mighty Ottawa, wound with them around the base of the towering Laurentian Hills, which lie north of Lakes Huron and Superior, across the great prairie belt, down through the dark cañons and gulches of the Rocky Mountains to the shore of the Pacific Ocean, and have in glowing language described the varied beauties of that great extent of country.

I have, myself, stood on the shore of the Red River of the north when it lay deep down between its snow-capped banks, calm and solitary, held in the icy clasp of winter, and looking like a huge rent in the far-reaching prairie, its banks dotted at intervals with the thatched and comfortable dwelling of the Indian half-breed, interspersed with clumps of willow, alder, and maple and a few grand old elms.

I have stood upon the fertile bank of the same stream when it was a huge, rushing, turbid yellow torrent, completely filling its channel up to the level of the flower-bedecked prairie. I have stood upon the high bank of the Assiniboine, looked across its broad, fertile valley, and traced the windings of the stream as it meandered from side to side of the valley on its way east to join the Red River; looked across to the opposite side and viewed with swelling bosom the glorious old flag of England waving proudly in all the beauty of an April sunset above the stockade of Fort Ellice.

I have stood upon the high bank of the Qu'Appelle valley and watched the same flag floating proudly in the breeze above another of the Honourable Hudson's Bay Company's forts, and after crossing the vale and stream, and ascending the opposite bank to the level prairie above, have looked back on a drizzly April morning across that vale of beauty, and it

required no great stretch of the imagination to picture what it must be when bedecked in its gorgeous summer dress. I have passed through the poplar groves, the flower-bedecked glades, and wound round the shores of the lovely lakelets of the Touchwood Hills. I have crossed the great salt plain, struggled through its quagmires and waded its saline creeks, and stood upon the bank of the South Saskatchewan and gazed upon that mighty river tracing its serpentine course away in the broad valley, at least three hundred feet below the level of the prairie, from south-west to north-east, and noted the thin columns of blue smoke at my feet and in the distance which marked the home of the French half-breed, with the sides of the trail here and there dotted, singly and in groups, with the tepees of the Cree, Sioux and Stoney.

I stood upon the shore of the same stream and gazed upon the spot where, on that cold November morning, Lieutenant Butler drove the rifle bullet into poor Blackie's brain to put an end to his suffering, when he found it was beyond his power to save the life of the faithful brute which had so gamely borne him over so many miles on his western journey. It seemed as if the whole scene was being enacted over again before my sight. The swarthy half-breed, in blanket capote, a few paces in advance, holding the halter of the cautiously-treading animal; his master a few paces in rear, gently urging him forward; the sudden giving way of the ice, and plunges of the hardy little beast in his vain endeavour to stem the seething current; the master, at the risk of his life, throwing himself down upon the ice and wriggling to the edge of the dark chasm and seizing the halter, in the vain hope of being able to haul him out; his rushing up the bank when he finds all hope of rescue must be abandoned; the little puff of white smoke, followed by the sharp, whip-like crack of the rifle, and

down goes the noble head. As I looked upon the shaggy little animal against whose shoulder I leaned while gazing upon the rushing river, my mind's eye reviewing the little tragedy of that cold and now distant morning, and thought of the many miles over hill and dale, ploughing through snow-drifts, and wading over miles of water-covered prairie; through rushing creeks of half-melted snow, where both horse and rider were all but submerged; trotting along, threading his way amongst the countless badger-holes, galloping across the level, treeless plain, or toiling through the alkali quag-mires, through all which he had so gamely borne me; and then, when the bridle and saddle were removed at the close of the hard day's work, hobbling off, with shackled feet, to pick up his scanty supper of brown, withered grass, while his master, after partaking of his pork and biscuit, his dish of warm tea and evening pipe, wrapped in blanket and furs, lies down to sleep away the few intervening hours which should usher in another day's toil, lulled to sleep by the whistling of the wind around his canvas covering,—I felt that I could appreciate the feelings of the brave soldier who rushed into his tent, sat down, and shed tears over the death of a little horse.

I have stood upon the high bank of the North Saskatchewan and gazed upon the majestic stream as it lay like a huge serpent far in the valley beneath, winding its way north-easterly to join with the south branch at the Forks, an apparently illimitable forest of spruce and poplar spreading far as the eye could reach away northwards; the south shore, with its fringe of timber, backed by the miles of prairie which I had crossed. The mind's eye seemed to review the past and depict the future of that great country. The past history of those vast plains seemed to pass, like a panorama, before

one: the countless herds of bison feeding peacefully on the luscious grasses; the sudden rush of the frightened animals as the feathered and painted hunters dashed in amongst them on their panting and foam-covered mustangs, followed by the prowling coyote, dealing havoc and death right and left. The peaceful Indian village; the joyous shout of sporting childhood; the busy house—or, rather, tent—wife; the listless, lazy hunters and warriors, lolling and smoking away the long summer day; the sharp, wild shriek of terror, and death-yell of the dying, as the peaceful village is suddenly awakened at the dark midnight hour or gray dawn by the war-cry of the enemy; the whistling arrow and tomahawk of the bloodthirsty foe; the battle in the open prairie in broad daylight, when brave manfully meets brave, when it is man to man, knife to knife, tomahawk to tomahawk; where, hand to hand and foot to foot, they strive for the coveted trophy of their prowess—the bloody scalp; the wails of despair as the vanquished return to their village, bearing their dead and wounded, with the sad tale of the loss of husbands and fathers, of lovers and brothers; the shouts of the victors returning to their village, waving aloft the bloody proofs of victory, and leading forward the hapless captives, who only too well know their fate to be the torture and the stake.

But a change is gradually stealing over the spirit of the dream: the self-sacrificing missionary begins to penetrate those distant wilds; many fall victims to the relentless savages; but no sooner is their fate known than the gap is filled by others, who, undeterred by the fate of their predecessors, willingly leave kindred, home, and friends—and all, many would think, that makes life worth living—to lay down their lives in the cause of the Great Master; and again, as in olden times, the blood of the martyrs has become the seed of the

Church. The Bread of Life has been cast upon the troubled waters of a bloodthirsty humanity; and, though in small and almost imperceptible quantities, it is being gathered after many days. First the presence of the Black Robe is tolerated amongst them; then, by the example of their blameless lives, a few are turned from their idols, and gradually, and almost unknown to themselves, they become a power in the respective tribes. A midnight attack is made upon a village where a priest happens for the time to be sojourning, terror and despair seize the whole camp, but the holy father assumes command and is implicitly obeyed; he shouts to the warriors, in their own tongue, to seize their arms and defend their homes, their wives, and little ones; they rally at his call; the enemy is driven off with loss; the foe cannot understand how they were defeated, for the surprise had been complete. At last the intelligence reaches them the Black Robe was in the village; the cause of their overthrow is now explained: how could they succeed against an enemy when he was in their midst?

But soon other palefaces, actuated by greed of gain and lust of power, begin to penetrate amongst the tribes. Humanity and justice are to them a sealed book. The good priests feel they have now a more subtile, a more cunning, and a more devilish enemy to deal with than the bloodthirsty aborigines themselves—an enemy who know no scruples of conscience; an enemy who worm their way insidiously into the confidence of those children of the wilds in order to work their ruin to their own advantage; and the carts of illicit traders may be seen wending their way from tribe to tribe laden with worthless gew-gaws and fire-water, setting up their trading posts and luring on their victims to certain destruction. A craving for rum, which seems insatiable, seizes the

red men: they freely imbibe all the evil propensities, and are taught none of the virtues, of the whites, and all their evil passions riot in excess. While under control of the Honourable Hudson's Bay Company none of these were allowed amongst them; and if the Company did not Christianize, neither did they debauch, and a fair value was given the red man for his labours in the chase.

But all is now changed: the buffalo, which furnished both food and clothing, has become almost extinct. The giving up of their nomadic life, and the adoption of the vices only of civilized humanity, are steadily and surely decimating the number of the Indians, and in this, as in all other parts of the continent, the introduction of the white has been the sure forerunner of the destruction of the red man. And it requires not the eye of a seer to see in the near future those vast plains covered with cities, towns, and villages, and a teeming population; when those wide, rolling rivers will be covered with a fleet of steamboats, freighted with the products of the loom, the anvil, and the soil, and the smoke of the locomotive hovering over the plains in every direction, while the native red man will have become almost extinct.

But while the descriptive powers of so many pens and pencils have been employed in describing the magnificence of that vast country, there are scenes of equal, if not greater, beauty almost at our doors, where, although the extent of country is not so vast, nor the streams so majestic, there are many fairy nooks, lakes and islands, rolling rivers, tumbling brooks and wimpling burns, of pine-clad hills and lovely forest dells, which would task the powers of the most gifted pen to describe or pencil to illustrate. There, in the North-West, the rivers, though large, are all yellow and muddy with the washings of the soil through which they wind their

devious course, and it is only the most burning thirst which can tempt the weary traveller to partake of their waters; here they are clear as crystal, and so cool and refreshing that the very sight of the water tempts one to taste the tempting draught. There it is only the coarser varieties of the finny tribe that are to be met with, except in the great lakes; here almost every little creek can provide the hungry with a rich repast of brook trout, while every lakelet is teeming with the luscious speckled lake and salmon trout, which can be caught in abundance either by angling or by the night-line at all seasons of the year. There, except the wild goose and ducks of the lakelets and marshes and the prairie chickens, the only game now to be met with is the hare, the jackass rabbit and sneaking coyote; here the lakes and rivers abound with the beaver, mink, and otter—the woods with the marten, fisher, and fox, the gigantic and noble moose and graceful red deer, the gray wolf, black bear and lynx. Come with me and we will spend a summer holiday in this sylvan retreat, where, though we can reach it in a few hours' travel, we will be completely cut off from the busy haunts of men.

The glorious time of youth, lads,
  When all the trees are green—
Every goose a swan, lads,
  And every lass a queen;
Then hey for rod and gun, lads,
  And to the woods away,
For youth must have its fling, lads,
  And every dog its day.

CHAPTER II.

PREPARING FOR A START.

THE lakes of the Lower Muskoka—Muskoka Lake, Lakes Joseph and Rosseau—have been explored in every nook and corner; their every bay and inlet, solitary rock, and pine-clad islet have been graphically described, and the best spots to secure the denizens of their depths; the islets where the basket can be most quickly filled with the luscious huckleberry, the raspberry, and strawberry have been pointed out to the sportsman and berry-picker. Lakes Mary, Fairy, Vernon and Peninsula, and the winding river between, have also afforded material for pen and pencil. One or two of the more venturesome newspaper correspondents have hazarded a few lines on the beauties of Lake of Bays and Hollow Lake; but it is the purpose of the present writer to visit the hitherto unknown wilds of the Upper Muskoka, and endeavour to lay before his readers some of the beauties of lake and river, of mountain and valley, which, though almost at our doors, are still so far away and so little known.

We leave the steamer at the thriving village of Bracebridge, to retrace her route with her deck-load of pleasure-seekers down the winding river to Muskoka Lake, across to Port Carling, through the locks and up the short stream into

Lake Rosseau, thread her mazy course among the scrub oak, pine and fern-clad islets to her nightly quarters at the village of Rosseau. We secure the frugal supply of provisions necessary for our sojourn in the wilds, and, engaging a team of horses, wend our way eastward through a newly-settled district; past the trough-covered shanty, the more substantial hewn log-house with shingled roof, and occasional frame dwelling of the hardy settler. Past little churches and unpretentious school-houses, each with its quota of strong, hardy, and in many cases barefooted, boys and girls, presided over by the neatly-dressed and courteous lady teacher. The scenes recall our own early youth, and we seem to live our school-days over again, and, as we look into the fearless, honest faces of the children, we feel with the poet that

> There's something in an honest boy,
> A brave, free-hearted, generous one,
> With his unchecked, unbidden joy,
> His dread of books, his love of fun—
> And in his clear and sunny smile,
> Unshaded by a thought of guile,
> And unrepressed by sadness—
> That brings me to my childhood back,
> As if I trod its very track,
> And felt its very gladness.

We pass through groves of stately sugar maples, of birch, beech, and basswood; through stretches of woods where the fire-fiend has left his trade-mark on giant pine and hemlock, and destroyed many thousands of dollars' worth of valuable timber; through sections depleted of their timber by the axe of the lumberman; past groves of stately balsam; through tamarack, spruce, and cedar swamps; through clearings of waving grain and new mown hay. Herds of kine are quietly feeding on the luxuriant grass which has sprung up along

the old lumber roads, and the tinkle-tinkle of the cow-bell is heard on every side. We pass over stretches of hard clay and soft, sandy road; up stony hills, where the horses have to strain every nerve to haul their load to the top; down others where it is equally difficult, even with the assistance of a brake on the wheel, to restrain the impetus of the vehicle; over corduroys in the swamps and morasses; up an inclined plane through the Devil's Gap; over strongly-built bridges spanning the otherwise impassable gullies, with their ever-present grass and alder-fringed creek beneath. Now the timid gray rabbit is bounding along the road before us; again, a mother-partridge is hurrying her down-covered chicks to cover. High over head the gray hen-hawk is basking in the sunshine, giving forth its shrill whistle at short intervals; while the coo of the wood-pigeon, the cher-irr of the squirrel, and cluck-cluck of the striped chipmunk are heard in the neighbouring covert; while from yonder beetling crag an antlered buck may be seen gazing down upon our lumbering waggon with its gay and chattering load.

After some sixteen miles of jolting over the rough road, with occasional short walks up the hills to ease the panting horses, a sudden bend is made to the right, and we enter the busy little village of Baysville, on the north bank of the south branch of the Muskoka River. The village is some two miles below the foot of Lake of Bays, or, as some call it, Trading Lake, and is the end of steamboat navigation in this quarter. Here there is a fine water-power spanned by a substantially-built bridge, dam, and timber-slide; on the north side is a saw-mill, and on the south a grist or flour mill, both doing a thriving trade. Out on one of the piers a disciple of Izaak Walton is hauling the speckled beauties out of the seething waters, as they boil and bubble, rush and tumble,

over the dark granite rocks. Here we pause for the night in one of the comfortable hotels, presided over by a courteous landlord and attentive landlady, and sup at a board loaded with dainties which would tempt the most fastidious epicure, and retire for the night to a comfortable room, and a bed which would woo the drowsy god even if we had not the aching joints occasioned by our long and rough ride. This is the last night we shall pass between wooden walls and under shingled roof-tree for, it may be, several weeks. To-morrow night, and for many succeeding, we shall sleep beneath our cotton tent; our bed, the boughs of the fragrant balsam, and, instead of snow-white sheets and feather pillows, we will lie between the folds of our strong gray blankets, with—shall we mention it?—our boots and folded coat for a pillow. To-night we may indulge in brown stout, Bass's ale, and various other strong drinks, fragrant Havana, tea, with both cream and sugar, tarts, pies, jellies, and puddings, with fresh eggs and luscious butter just from the churn. To-morrow our only drink will be tea—in a tin pannikin, with neither cream nor sugar,—or the pure, crystal water of the river, for no intoxicants of any kind are to be found in our commissariat. Biscuits, or as they are familiarly called, hard tack, with pork, beans, and dried apples, and perhaps a bottle of pickles or box of sardines for the first meal or two, shall compose our food, while to smoke aught but a briar-root or clay pipe is a forbidden luxury in our camp.

Here we must complete our supplies. Our birchen canoes are to be purchased, a few forgotten articles, such as an extra tin dish, a box of matches, a little baking soda, and an extra plug or two of Myrtle Navy must likewise be added our store, also a few bottles of pain-killer, a bottle of castor oil and a box or two of pills, and a few cakes of Castile soap.

CHAPTER III.

LAKE OF BAYS.

EARLY in the morning the shrill whistle of the little steamer awakes us from our dreams, and in a few minutes we are up and dressed. It is a glorious morning. The rays of the rising sun are shining on the dark green woods to the west, while the red face of old Sol himself is just beginning to show above an eastern hill. A thin mist only partially conceals the rushing river. The sharp buzz of the saw is already to be heard converting the huge pine log into lumber. The disciple of Walton is again at his post with rod and fly, bent on securing his breakfast of shiny beauties hidden beneath the surface of the bubbling waters. The whistling of birds is commingled with the joyous song of the trim milk-maid, as she seats herself by the side of old Hawkie to extract the rich white milk from the distended udder. Gay Chanticleer is strutting around, leading the feathered beauties of his harem with their young brood in search of the proverbial early worm—alas! for the poor early worm; while a stray lady porker with her squalling brood is trudging round—a wooden yoke, *as a voucher for her character*, on her neck—on the lookout for the easiest way into kitchen garden or potato patch.

Soon we have partaken of a hasty but substantial breakfast, bountifully spread on the snow-white tablecloth. Our bill is paid, and we wend our way to the dock where lies the little steamer puffiing and blowing, and straining at her fastenings, for though still tied to the wharf her screw is slowly churning up the limpid waters, the engine having been set in motion for the purpose of proving whether the machinery is in proper working order. We are greeted with a kindly grasp of the hand by the jolly captain, who is perambulating the dock enjoying his morning pipe. The hands are busily engaged in taking in her cargo; our few traps are soon on board, and the canoes laid on the big punt invariably towed behind, the vessel being too small to admit of the necessary boats being carried on deck; a toot-toot from the whistle, the captain grasps the spokes of the wheel, he gives a sharp pull to an adjacent wire, there is a loud tinkle-tinkle of a bell in the engine-room, a quick, trembling motion and low rumbling noise, the dock with its half-dozen villagers, who have come down to see us off, is quickly left behind, and the plucky little vessel is stemming the placid waters at a speed of not less than eight miles an hour.

Gracefully and swiftly she makes her way round the sharp bends of the river, past comfortable and thrifty homesteads, when gradually Lake of Bays opens to the view. The field-glass is unslung from the shoulder, the focus adjusted, and seated in front of the wheel-house, we gaze upon the varied beauties of the Lake. Immediately in front the lake is dotted here and there with high rocky pine-clad islands; every rock, tree, and limb is faithfully mirrored in the surrounding water, —the shadow almost as distinct as the substance. There, on the one hand, are three or four loons, the great northern diver, with their beautiful plumage, each one, like the islands, seem-

ing double; on the other side the canoe of a settler is swiftly approaching, a hat is waved, an answering scream from the whistle, a tinkle of the engine-room bell, the rumbling of the machinery and churning of the screw ceases, and we are at a standstill. The canoe swiftly approaches, delivers its message, and we are again away on our course. A little further on, and wheeling to the shore, we tie up at a primitive wharf composed of a rough wooden pier with three or four logs extending from it to the shore and covered with a few loose planks. Piled on the bank are several cords of dry wood, a portion of which is speedily transferred to our hold, and the little vessel is again ploughing her way through the calm waters of the lake.

The most of the south shore, as far as can be seen to the east, has been redeemed from the primeval forest, and where only a few years ago was an unbroken wilderness there are now thriving and well-stocked farms, with good dwellings and capacious barns. Right in front is a long, low, rocky point, the lake extending on its right some ten or twelve miles east to the village of Colebridge at Cedar Narrows, famous for its trout, venison, and steaks of bear meat. Should the traveller wish to visit Hollow Lake, that is his route; but as we are bent for the head waters of the branch of the Muskoka River which extends further to the east, we steer to the north of the point, and a sheet of water larger than what we have yet seen opens to our sight.

The western shore is high and bluffy, the timber chiefly hardwood, while at short intervals the forest is broken by large clearings, well-fenced and cultivated, everything denoting the success and approaching independence of the hardy backwoodsman who only a few years ago penetrated these wilds, with, in many cases, only his axe and hands, to hew

out for himself a home in the unbroken and then almost unknown wilderness. How much this Canada of ours owes to those hardy pioneers! What an evidence of the success which almost invariably attends the industrious and persevering! How is it that our towns and cities are so crowded with the poor and starving, with their cry of no work? Out here there are thousands of farm lots of one hundred acres each, which can be had free for the taking, on almost any of which many a labourer or artisan would be better off than in town or city. Here they have no rent, high taxes, water and gas rates, or high-priced fuel. On nearly the worst of the land they can grow at least potatoes and other vegetables, and keep their cow, pig, and hens, the three sources from which so many of the necessaries of life are drawn, while nearly all the year round abundance of work may be had at a good remuneration for any time that can be spared from the farm, and within a reasonable distance of their homes.

After steaming for over an hour another rocky point is rounded, and we are in sight of the end of our steamboating. Away in the distance we see through the glass the end of the North Bay. A narrow strip of yellow sand lines the shore. Behind is a clearing filled with blackened and charred stumps, while in the front, a few rods up a gentle incline from the water's edge, stands a substantial frame house. At a distance of a mile and a quarter from the landing we pass a bold, high bluff to our left. Right in our front, and an eighth of a mile from the landing, a large creek, the outlet of some two or three small lakelets, pours its waters into the bay; while to the right, in a little recess, may be seen the mouth of the North River, the stream which we purpose ascending.

Another shrill scream from the whistle, a few more turns of the screw, another tinkle of the bell in the engine-room,

the machinery stops, and with lessening speed we approach and finally stop alongside the primitive dock of rough, undressed logs. We have reached the end of the first stage of our journey, the village of Dwight, at the head of the North Bay.

Stepping on shore we are accorded a hearty greeting by the landlord of the Dwight Temperance House and a number of the hardy and bronzed settlers, who have come out to get their weekly mail, and make their few purchases at the little store which, as well as the post office, is kept in conjunction with the Temperance House. Our goods are quickly transferred to shore, the mail-bag changed, a few packages of merchandise, bags of flour and sides of bacon laid out on the dock, and after a hearty shake of the hand and a *bon voyage* from captain and engineer, the whole crew, the engine is again put in motion, and after backing off a few boat-lengths, the signal is given, "full steam ahead"; and wheeling round to the left, first her broadside, then the gracefully-rounded stern and the turmoil of waters are presented to view. She proceeds on her way down round the peninsula which divides the North from the South Bay, up which she proceeds to Colebridge, when, after performing the same round of duties as at Dwight, the prow is again pointed westward. When the rays of the setting sun illuminate the eastern hills, turning every object golden, striking upon some exposed felspar or quartz-crystal on granite bluff, transforming them into apparent gems of the purest water, she again, puffing and panting like a tired horse, ties up at her dock of the morning. The boat has made her daily round of the lakes, and both vessel and crew have honestly earned their night's repose.

The view down the bay from the verandah of the Dwight House is a magnificent one. Across the bay to the right

the dense forest has given place to wide, well-fenced fields of waving grain, with comfortable farmhouses and good barns. To the left a similar transformation is taking place. Another opening in the woods down the left shore, and wreath of blue, curling smoke denotes the presence of another of those elements of Ontario's greatness, the hardy pioneer. The remainder of the shore seen from this point of view is covered with a dense growth of waving maple, birch, and basswood, with an occasional gigantic pine or hemlock towering high above its fellows. Here and there a bold, treeless bluff, the rock nearly concealed by a covering of rich brown, flower-besprinkled moss, is visible at intervals between the trees. But, in order to appreciate all the beauties of Lake of Bays, one must view it at the various seasons of the year. In winter, all is covered with a mantle of spotless white; the leafless boughs bent beneath their load of snow, which is whirled at intervals by the fierce northern blast in dense, white wreaths across the ice-bound waters. Soon as the warm rays of the spring sun have melted the snow and released the water of the lake from its icy covering, the trees begin to unfold their buds, and in a few days all is in full summer dress of deep green; and the drumming of the partridge, the coo of the pigeon and whistle of the robin are heard on every side. Again, as the warm summer draws to a close, and the leaves begin to ripen, the frosty nights of October assisting Nature in her handiwork: first the maple shows a yellowish tinge, gradually deepening into various shades of red; then the birch, beech, and lastly the basswood follow suit. Here, scenes of varied beauty that would task the powers of the most gifted pen or pencil are spread out before the admiring eye.

CHAPTER IV.

WE START OUT.

WIGHT has become of late years a favourite resort for the tourist, the lover of piscatorial sport, and the deer-hunter. Many a huge trout has been hauled out of the deep waters of the bay, and many a noble buck has got its death-wound while breasting the foam-crested wave to escape the baying hound, which has roused him at early morn from his lair under the "greenwood tree." Here, also, the overworked and confined city clerk can spend his brief summer holiday, and recruit his shattered nerves, inhaling the pure air of forest and lake; while he can sleep on as soft a bed and sit down to a board loaded with nearly all the luxuries of the city, attended by the courteous landlady, who seems bent only on attending to the most minute wants of her guests. But now we are for the first time to partake of our own frugal fare. The tin tea-pail and drinking-dishes are unpacked; a fire is started by the side of a stump; the tea-chest opened, and half-a-handful of the fragrant leaves thrown into the pailful of cold water, for experience has taught us that the best method of extracting all the nourishment out of the leaves is to put them into the cold water, and remove the pail from the fire as soon as it has attained the boiling-point. A small pole is procured, the tea-pail hung

on one end, the other held in place by being thrust under a neighbouring log, supported in the middle by a billet of wood, the pail hanging over the fire. The frying-pan, after being carefully cleaned, is filled also with water. An opening is made in the end of the rough canvas bag, in which is the huge side of long, clear bacon. The cook, knife in hand, is at work cutting off a number of slices, which are placed in the pan, set on the fire, and allowed to boil a couple of minutes. This is called parboiling, and is for the purpose of removing the superfluous salt. The water is now poured off, and the next moment the air is impregnated with the aroma of frying pork, which in a few minutes is cooked. Suddenly there is a frizzing sound on the fire, as a portion of the now boiling tea forces its way by the accumulating steam out around the sides of the lid. It is quickly removed from the fire, the lid taken off, half-a-dishful of cold water is thrown in, when the leaves immediately subside to the bottom. The head is knocked out of the biscuit-barrel. The shout of the single word, dinner, speedily brings all hands, each with tin plate and tea-dish to the spot; when each, having helped himself to a slice of pork, a spoonful or two of gravy, and filled his dish with the fragrant tea, makes his way to the biscuit-barrel, where a few of the hard, brown discs are laid on top of the pork. A neighbouring log or spot of grass serves for a seat, the knees for a table, and do we enjoy the dinner? Well, to use a homely and perhaps a rather vulgar phrase, "You bet!"

As this is the last chance of availing ourselves of Her Majesty's mail, while our cook is washing the dishes and packing up we hastily scribble a few lines to home and loved ones. The river for the first eight or ten miles, with the exception of the first two, is composed of a series of rough,

roaring chutes and rapids, too rough for canoeing. What is a chute? you ask. It is a short stretch of water, where there is not a perpendicular fall, but the stream is hemmed in and somewhat narrowed in its channel by projecting rocks, and dashes foaming and tossing down an inclined plane over sharp-pointed rocks and large boulders, terminating at the bottom either in a deep bay or rapid. We must take our things overland five miles to a point half a mile above Hunter's Bridge. The distance by the winding stream being nearly twice as far, the services of a settler and his team are secured. A couple of men are sent on ahead with axes, to cut any newly-fallen trees out of the way. The goods are loaded on the waggon; the canoes, if taken on the load, would run a fair chance of being broken on the rough road, so they must be carried. They are laid bottom down upon the ground, two paddles laid along the two centre thwarts and fastened thereto, a sufficient distance apart to allow the head of the bearer to pass up between and a paddle to rest on either shoulder, then, stooping down and grasping a gunwale with each hand, we

> Take her up tenderly,
> Lift her with care:
> [She is] fashioned so slenderly,

and raise the one end, turn her over above the head and let her down till a paddle rests on either shoulder, the other end still resting on the ground; then, slightly stooping, we bend forward till the light vessel is neatly balanced on the shoulders, and now, straightening up, the hands still grasping the gunwales, away we march, in single file, after the waggon.

For the first three miles the country is level, with a ridge of hardwood hills at a short distance from the road on the north. The axe of the lumberman and the ravages of the fire-king have well-nigh destroyed all the original forest be-

tween the hill to the north and the river on the south. It has been succeeded by a growth of white birch, poplar, and red cherry, the whole surface being covered by the wild raspberry and black thimbleberry, while, twining amongst the roots, the slender vines of the still more luscious strawberry are in equal abundance, while here and there are clumps of the sumach and black alder, with its big clusters of small red fruit. We pass through a few small abandoned clearings. A small lakelet lies nestled in its margin of marsh grass in a hollow to the left, while the roar of the river, as it tumbles over its rocky bed, may be heard, at short intervals, on the right. The hardwood hill to the north now bends southerly across our path, and we cross a few ridges, covered with a dense growth of huge maples, black birch and hemlock. A mile or so further, and we come to a stop on top of a hill some three hundred feet high, down which the road has been cut in an almost straight line. Here, far down in the hollow, we catch glimpses of the silvery river shining through the trees, running at right angles to our path, and spanned by a little dilapidated bridge. This is Hunter's Bridge, and is as far as the road has been built. On the edge of the hill, on the further bank of the stream, is an old deserted clearing of an acre or two in extent, with the remains of an old shanty in the centre. Here, a number of years ago, a man named Hunter built his cabin, and moved his family into the woods far from any other settler. He was in the habit of crossing the country to the settlement of Cedar Narrows, some nine miles to the south, at regular intervals. During the depths of an uncommonly severe winter a longer interval than usual had elapsed since his last visit, and the settlers at the Narrows becoming alarmed for his safety, Mr. C——, with the never-failing solicitude which one dweller in the bush feels for the welfare of another,

donned his snowshoes and, alone, made the long tramp over the deep, soft snow. The poor man was found laid out a corpse in his lonely hut. He had been dead for several days. The mateless woman and fatherless children huddled round a small fire, eating a few frozen potatoes, their only food. The bread-winner was gone.

Lay him low, lay him low
In the clover or the snow;
What cares he? He cannot know.
Lay him low.

Hunter's Bridge is the eastern terminus of a Government colonization road, and connects also at this point with the northern terminus of the Bobcaygeon road. We now turn to the left, and the waggon proceeds half a mile further over a rough trail, when it reaches the end of its journey. At noon we bade good-bye to steam power, and must now part with horses and waggon. Henceforth our only means of transport will be the bark canoe along the smooth stretches of the river and across the lakes; while crossing the portages, bending beneath our packs, with tump-line across the brow, we must be our own pack mules.

The waggon is quickly unloaded, turned round with some little difficulty amongst the closely growing trees, and is away on its homeward journey. Here our labour begins in earnest, and hastily turning the canoes bottom upwards—for the gradually gathering clouds portend an approaching shower—as many of the goods as they will cover are placed underneath; as much of the remainder as we will be unable to take in the first trip is piled together and covered with a light rubber sheet. Each man now hastily snatching up a pack and swinging it upon the shoulder, we hurry off along the narrow trail. One hand grasps the tump-line, while with the other

we ward off the numerous limbs projecting across the path, which, if not thus guarded against, might play sad havoc with eye and face. We scramble, or half roll, over a fallen tree or two, and bend beneath another which has been torn out by the roots by some passing storm and arrested in its fall by coming in contact with another. Another half mile and again the shining river, glinting through the trees, bursts upon the view. A few steps more and we are at the landing. Only a very small piece of the stream is visible from this point, while to the right is heard the roar of a short rapid where the river is divided into two parts by a small island at the top of a ledge of rock. We have reached our first camp-ground. The packs are tossed off, and we seat ourselves for a moment upon them, while hats are removed and pocket-handkerchiefs hastily applied to reddened brows and perspiring faces. We straighten up, and gaze for a few minutes on a scene of sylvan beauty. The view is very limited in extent, for neither fire nor the lumberman has caused destruction here, and great pines, maple, hemlock and cedar, with a dense undergrowth of balsam and hazel, encircle us on every side. But there is little time for either rest or meditation, for though the clouds are passing off without the threatened shower, the slanting rays of the fast declining sun denote the near approach of night. The remainder of the goods are to be brought in from the end of the road. Tents are to be put up, brush for the beds to be cut, gathered, and spread, the firewood for the night to be procured; for although it is here in abundance and to spare, still it has to be cut and brought in, the fire started, packs undone, supper cooked and eaten, and a dozen and one other odd jobs—known only to those accustomed to a life in the woods—to be got through with before darkness finally sets in.

CHAPTER V.

FIRST NIGHT IN CAMP.

THE camp ground is an old one, having been used for many years by surveyors, hunters, and trappers, so there is no clearing-off or levelling of ground to be done. The force is divided; a part return for the remainder of the baggage, while two others cut tent poles and pegs, and set up the tent; another cuts down a balsam, carefully selecting one with a large top: the pin-covered limbs are broken off at a short distance from the trunk, and brought in. The tent has been erected, carefully and evenly stretched, and the brushing is begun. We commence at the back by laying down each separate limb with its top to the rear, and the side which was undermost when growing on the tree turned on top. This process is continued till the whole surface is covered with a sufficient thickness to make a soft and even bed, care being taken to keep the broken ends next the ground. A pole, five or six inches in diameter, is laid across the ends of the brush at the door, and kept in its place by pegs driven into the ground at each end. The whole floor now presents a soft, smooth, dark green elastic surface. By this time the goods are all in except the canoes, and as neither bears nor wolves will eat them, and there are no thieves here, they are

safe where they are till "to-morrow morning." A few projecting limbs have been left four or five inches long on the upright pole at the back of the tent, on which to hang powder horn, shot bag, field-glass, etc., while the rifle and double barrel are stacked around, and carefully tied to the same pole, for the double purpose of protecting them from the damp and reducing the chances of an accident to a minimum. The packs are opened, our dunnage bags and everything not immediately wanted are stored away in the bole at the back of the tent. The blankets are spread out and rolled back to the head till bedtime. Our heavy boots are removed and replaced by a light and easy pair of gaiters or mocassin slippers, and we begin to feel at home and are quite comfortable.

Darkness has now set in, and what about supper? Our cook has not been idle; a huge fire is blazing away a few feet in front of the door; a stout post about four feet long, cut from the top of a small tree—where the trunk has branched off into two parts, and these both lopped off a few inches above the point of divergence, thus forming a crotch,—has been securely driven into the ground a foot or so from each end of the fire. Across those another stout pole has been laid, from which the tea pail is depending. The cold water and dry leaves are in process of being quickly transformed into tea. The cook, with glowing but merry face, leans over the frying-pan, carefully stirring up and turning the frizzling slices of the "unclean beast." The little can of mustard is got out; the one bottle of pickles produced, the neck broken off, to save the trouble of drawing the cork. In a few minutes everything is in readiness, and the dinner scene is enacted over again. Pork and biscuits and dishes of tea disappear with amazing quickness and in goodly quantities, for the afternoon's work has given all hands a good appetite,

while joke and jest are bandied from side to side. Supper finished, pocket-knives, pipes, and plugs of T. B. or Myrtle Navy are produced. We have no tobacco-pouches with ready cut, but prefer cutting a pipeful as it is required. Pipes are lit and a general smoke is begun. The sight is a pleasing one. Here one is seated on the ground with back against a log, puffing away in silence; two or three, seated on the pole at the door of the tent, are engaged in quiet conversation, discussing the morrow's programme; others are reclining on elbow, or stretched at full length on the dry leaves. One who does not indulge in the weed is laid out with hands under his head on the brush in the tent, and with lusty voice is shouting to the company how

> I was dreaming last night,
> Oh, bad luck to my dreaming;
> I was dreaming that Teddy
> Was false unto me;

while still another is equally intent on informing the company how he

> Met her in the garden
> Where the praties grow.

We retire a few paces into the shade and survey the scene. We have seen on canvas many pictures of camp life, but never aught that did the scene justice. The merry group, the snow-white tent, the blazing fire, the illuminated trunks of the huge pines, the lights and shadows amongst the green leaves, the silvery ripple of the river where a single ray from the fire has penetrated to its surface, the glittering stars overhead, the soft, mellow light of the moon as she shows her face above the eastern hill, the solemn stillness of the night, broken only by the gentle murmur of the adjacent rapid. Attempt to describe it. Pshaw!

The cook is hard at work. The dishes have been washed and carefully piled, bottom up, on a piece of newly-peeled hemlock bark. All the birch within a considerable radius of this old camp-ground has long since been denuded of its yellow coat. Pork is to be parboiled for breakfast, and more boiled for dinner. The round pointed steel shovel has had a handle inserted in its socket. A hole a foot and a half in diameter, and of an equal depth, has been dug close to the fire and filled with burning embers to dry out and heat it. A tin pail half filled with water is got ready. The bag of white beans is brought forth, a few tea-dishfuls are carefully picked over and emptied into the pail of water, which is now hung over the fire. Another pail of water is placed alongside it, the sack of dried apples brought within the radius of the light, a few handfuls are taken out and carefully washed in the big tin dish, then squeezed between the hands and dropped into the second pail. The dirty water is now thrown out of the dish, and replaced by a few dipperfuls of clean hot water. The sack of bacon is again visited, several square chunks are cut off, and tossed into the dish of hot water, scraped and washed clean, and deposited in still another pail of water, which now takes its place as number three over the fire. Our cook has now a breathing-spell, and has time to light his pipe also and join in the conversation for half an hour or so. At the end of that time the lid of the apple pail is removed, a large iron fork thrust down to the bottom, and the whole mass stirred up. Another dipper of water is added, as the swelling fruit has absorbed most of the first supply. The lid is then replaced, and the bean pot treated in a similar manner. The pail of boiling pork is also subjected to a careful scrutiny to ascertain if it is not boiling dry. A part of the top is now taken off a box of raisins, from

which a few handfuls are carefully picked and washed clean. Another inspection of the apple pail shows that their cooking has reached the proper stage; it is removed from the fire, the raisins emptied in and carefully and evenly mixed with the apples, when it is again replaced on the fire and allowed to simmer for a few minutes, then finally taken off and a few spoonfuls of sugar added, the lid replaced and it is set to one side ready for breakfast. A bake-kettle which has hitherto been kept in the background now makes its appearance, and is scraped and thoroughly cleaned. The beans, which are by this time boiled soft, are emptied into it, the grease from the pork we had for supper is also put in. A few slices of raw fat pork are laid on top, the lid put on; the hole by the fire is emptied of its embers, a quantity of hot sand thrown in, and the bake-kettle put in on top, the whole being covered with hot sand and ashes. The boiling pork is now also done to a turn; it is taken from the fire, the swollen pieces held up in turn on the prongs of the big fork, and cold water poured over them, when it also is set aside ready for the table. The cook's day's, or rather night's, work is now over, for we hear his "Get out of the way, boys; I want to go to bed."

It is now time for all hands to retire, for we must be astir betimes in the morning, and the slight preparations for turning-in are soon made. The wide-brimmed straw hat is placed bottom up a little above where the head is intended to rest. The contents of the trousers pockets are emptied into the crown. No small article must be left round in a loose manner, or the chances are that it will be lost in the brush. The vest is folded, watch-pocket uppermost, and laid on top of the hat. Braces and socks are removed, and placed under the dunnage bag which, along with coat or smock-frock, is to form our pillow. The blankets have been

unrolled, and turning down the upper end of one of them we slide in between. "Are you coming to bed, Jack?" is addressed to a smoker seated at the door, who is reluctant to abandon the fragrant weed. "Yes, just in a minute, Tom." "Well, you had better hurry up then, and not disturb a fellow when he is asleep." "Lie over, Jim, and straighten out those big legs of yours, and try and be satisfied with your own half of the bed." "Now, Dick, straighten yourself out; I am quite willing to let you have half the bed, but must protest against your taking it out of the middle." "Straighten yourself, Bob, and keep your big feet to your own side," accompanied with a preliminary snore.

Such are a few of the expressions, garnished by sundry adjectives which it is not necessary, nor would it be polite, to repeat, which are to be heard on every side. A hushed conversation is still being carried on by one or two couples, when, "Come now, boys, you had better adjourn the debate till morning," is heard from the boss. This gentle and easily understood reminder is at once taken, and in a few minutes all is hushed in silence, broken only by the heavy breathing of the sleepers and the gentle murmur of the flowing river.

The first rays of the rising sun are just beginning to change into golden the green tops of the giant pines, when a loud "Hurrah, boys, breakfast; are you going to sleep all day," is heard from the cook, who has been up since the first gray streak of dawn, and in an incredibly short space of time all are up. The few articles of clothing which had been taken off the previous evening are donned, while negative compliments touching the respective merits as bedfellows are bandied from side to side, accompanied by a gentle reminder to the one who had spread the brush of "a big root or limb, right under my back or shoulder," the ready and

consoling retort, "Well, if you don't like my work, you can make it yourself to-night." "I guess I had better, and not trust it to you again if I want to sleep"; all, however, in the best of humour. Towel, soap, and comb in hand, we make our way to the side of the river. We have frequently read descriptions of the morning ablutions of camp life, in which the campers are represented as standing on stone or log, and stooping down to bathe the head in the limpid water. This method we consider both inconvenient and awkward, so we have provided ourselves with a handy tin wash-dish, which, having filled with water, is set on a moss-covered log or neighbouring bank, at a convenient height from the ground to avoid an unnecessary amount of stooping, and after having well scrubbed hands, face, and neck, empty the dish, which is immediately taken possession of by the next in waiting. The hasty toilet is soon completed, and we wend our way back to camp.

The pail of hot tea and pan of fried pork are standing invitingly ready. The shovel is again called into play to scrape the ashes off the top of the buried bake-kettle. A hook, cut from an adjacent sapling, is inserted into each ear; it is gently lifted out and set down at a convenient distance from the fire.

The dust is carefully wiped off the lid, one of the hooks inserted in the ring on top, it is lifted off, and the rich, steaming mess exposed to our admiring gaze. Spoons are at once dipped in; each one helps himself, a liberal quantity being laid on each plate. The biscuit barrel is again relieved of a portion of its contents, and with light hearts and hungry stomachs we find seats and begin the wholesome repast. In a few minutes both pork and beans have vanished. The plates are replenished with a few spoonfuls of the apple sauce

we had seen so carefully prepared the preceding evening. In fifteen or twenty minutes the meal is over, for when we sit down to eat here we mean business, and very little conversation is indulged in. A few stray remarks, such as "That's what will stick to a fellow's ribs, boys!" "Is that your fifth biscuit, Charlie?" "It is none of your [adjective] business, Bill;" "Better set down your plate and take the pot, Chris.," the speaker being in doubt whether the said plate or pot contains the most beans, being the only conversation indulged in. Breakfast over and pipes lit, we must now begin to pack up and prepare for the start up the river.

CHAPTER VI.

A CANOE VOYAGE.

THE canoes are sent for, and are soon laid alongside a log which extends out into the water of the little eddy. The ends are drawn a foot or two on to the soft shore to prevent their floating away. The tent is struck, and we proceed to arrange our goods and make the packs. We have been careful not to overstock ourselves with a superabundance of either clothing or provisions. It is a source of no small amusement to the genuine woodman to witness the vast quantity of supplies the amateur feels it necessary to take with him for a few days'—or, at most, weeks'—sojourn in the bush. There are the heavy canvas tent, with extra projecting fly; the bundles of blankets, waterproofs, and rubber sheets, and inflatable India-rubber bed and pillow; the boxes of bread, biscuit, and cheese; the bottles of pickles and spices; the cans of condensed milk and prepared fruits; the rolls of spiced bacon and tins of fresh beef and pressed vegetables; and last, but by no means least, the demijohns of brandy and gin, bottles of old rye and boxes of cigars. They have been in the enjoyment of nearly all the luxuries of a city larder, all the comforts of the drawing-room, and after a week or two's sojourn, return to town and recount to sym-

pathizing groups the many hardships they have endured. They tell of the many hours of severe toil, seated in the bow of a canoe, holding the end of a trawling line and puffing a fragrant Havana while a hired assistant paddles them round; or borne swiftly across the lake, propelled by the strong arms of the guide in the stern, rifle in hand, in pursuit of an unfortunate deer which has been driven in by the hounds; or standing by the foot of a fall or rapid, casting the fly to tempt the speckled denizens of the waters, with a dozen mosquitoes, half as many black-flies and sand-flies buzzing around, vainly endeavouring to effect an entrance to gloved hand or veil-protected face and neck. They have endured all those hardships, and now return home, vainly hugging the idea that they have been "roughing it."

Let us inspect our larder. We have several sides of long, clear bacon, Ramsey's best, sewn up in coarse brown canvas bags, about one hundred pounds in each sack; there are several bags of the best flour and a barrel of biscuits, sufficient to last till we can be long enough in one camp to enable the cook to bake loaf bread; a box of mixed green and black tea, a sack of dried apples, a few bushels of white beans—the smaller the bean the better the quality; a quantity of split peas for soup; a box or two of raisins; a quantity of rice and sugar, and a few bars of the best soap—a sufficient proportion of each to last the time we purpose being out. Each man carries his own tobacco, a few small cans each of mustard and pepper and a bag of table-salt; a box of matches and pound or two of yeast cakes and baking-soda, in the immediate charge of the cook. This is our larder. For liquors we have none, except a half-gallon tin flask filled with the best brandy, into which, by the advice of our family physician, we have put a sufficient quantity of quinine to

make it a valuable ague medicine, should we be threatened with an attack of that enervating and troublesome disease.

For protection against the weather, we have a large tent of No. 3 duck or heavy twilled gray cotton for ourselves and men, and another smaller one to hold the cookery and provisions. Each man has one pair of the largest and best gray blankets, and by way of wearing apparel, a pair of strong kip or cowhide boots, with patch bottoms and Hungarian tacks in the soles. The leg must not be long enough to interfere with the free use of the knee-joint. A pair of light gaiters, or moccasins or leather slippers, to put on when round camp; three or four pairs of light woollen socks, a couple of pairs of strong Guernsey drawers and as many shirts of the same material, and two strong cotton ones, one pair of brown duck and another pair of woollen pants, one coat and vest and a few coloured cotton handkerchiefs, a hat and towel: this comprises the whole of our wardrobe, and experience has taught us that it is a sufficient supply for all our wants. What is not required for immediate use we stow away in a common cotton grain bag, and the whole weighs only a few pounds. This is known by the name of the dunnage bag.

The writer of this has lived in the woods under canvas for months at a time, and at all seasons of the year, and has found the above-mentioned supplies ample; but if it is to be a winter party, the clothing will require to be of heavier material, with the addition of mitts and moccasins, and in deep snow, snowshoes will also be necessary. He has invariably brought his men out healthy, fat, wiry, and strong, and fitted for any amount of hard work.

But we must get to work and pack up. A pair of blankets is spread and doubled on the ground. The tump-line, which is made of two leather straps, each about six feet long by

three-fourths of an inch wide, and tapering to a point at one end, three inches of the other end has been passed through a small iron ring and securely sewn. Another strap three inches wide at the middle and two feet long, of good stiff harness leather, the ends tapering so that they also can be passed through the iron rings and sewn thereto, is laid across the blanket, the broad part projecting beyond its sides, and the straps two and one-half feet apart. The ends of the blankets are then turned in over the lines. Some other neatly folded blankets, dunnage bags, and other small traps, a sufficient quantity to make up the pack, are laid thereon. One man now seizes the broad part, or head band, near the iron rings. Another takes hold of the straps at the edge of the blanket on the opposite side, when each raises up his side, and the ends of the long thongs are passed through the rings. Then, each man straightening himself up, thong in hand, and a foot pressed on the pack, pulls them tight; a half knot then being made at each ring, the ends of the blanket are drawn together till they overlap. The thongs are crossed in the middle, the men changing with each other, and again drawn tight. The pack is now turned over and the thongs which have been passed around it again change hands. A half knot is made and the pulling process repeated till it will yield no more. A double knot is now made, and, as there is still a considerable length of the lines left, these are carried up the ends, again passed through the iron rings, drawn tight and securely tied. The pack is now completed, and is nearly round. The broad part of the line forms a big loop, and to raise it up, this is seized by the hands close to the rings, and by one swinging lift it is landed on the shoulders with the broad part across the forehead. If it has been properly made it will be small in comparison to its weight,

and will stand any amount of knocking round without becoming undone; besides being easily stowed away in the canoe. All the remainder of the goods are done up in like manner. The bake-kettle is carefully done up in one of the tents to prevent it from being accidentally broken. In the meantime the cook has got his dishes washed, and is in the act of stowing them away also, so as to make the least possible bulk.

The tea-pail, which is usually the smallest, is selected; our cooking utensils have been all made to order, so there is little difficulty in putting them together. First, the tin plates are laid in the bottom; next the tea-dishes are put in; the spoons and knives and forks follow, all having been carefully counted to see that none are lost; the lid is put on, the pail is then set in the next largest, the handle turned down, the lid of this one also put in its place; and the same process is gone through with till the largest alone is visible. The lid of this latter one is now securely tied on; a tump-line wound round the whole and tied with the projecting loop to receive the forehead of the carrier. Everything is now ready, and we proceed to load the canoes.

But while that is being done, another small but important matter must be attended to. Our birchen canoes are frail craft and easily damaged. A scrape on a stone, or bump against a snag, may pierce a hole in the bottom, or, at least, knock off a small piece of the gum from its seams, which are sewn together with the pliant roots of the tamarack—the watap of the Indians—and then coated over with gum. A small leak, soaking into the cedar lining, and thereby adding materially to its weight, besides wetting the goods, would quickly be the result. In order to be always prepared for such an emergency, each one is provided with a "gum dish."

A quantity of unmade shoemaker's resin, or tamarack gum, to which a sufficient quantity of grease to overcome its brittleness is added, is put in the dish and placed on the fire till the whole is thoroughly melted and mixed together. It is then taken off and allowed to cool, and whenever a leak begins to show the canoe is at once run on shore, emptied of its load and turned bottom up. A small fire is made, and the gum dish placed thereon in charge of an attendant. The bottom and ends of the little craft are carefully examined, but no hole is visible. The lips are now applied successively to certain suspicious-looking spots, pressed tight to the bark and the breath sucked in. If we can draw in air, the leak has been found, and a small wooden spoon, which has been hastily made with a pocket-knife, is dipped in the melted resin, a small portion is neatly spread over the hole, and the leak is stopped. The tiny craft is replaced in the water and held in place by one of the crew so that no part of it touches either a stone or the shore, while the other replaces the load, and again seated in their places they paddle away on their course. The whole delay has not been more than ten or fifteen minutes.

Our canoes are now loaded. Each pack is laid gently in its place, and in such a manner as to leave the bow a few inches higher than the stern. A sufficient space is left in both bow and stern for the two men who are to form the crew. The bowman takes his place, kneeling on the bottom, his knees resting on a few balsam or cedar boughs; the steersman, with paddle in hand, gently shoves her a few feet out into deeper water; then, as the other, with the blade of his paddle resting on the surface of the water, steadies her, he steps lightly in, also kneeling on newly plucked boughs. The canoe is then shoved out a few lengths, and turned

broadside to the shore. Resting on their paddles, they now ask, "How is she trimmed, boys?" and the answer is given, "All right." The paddles, one on the right, the other on the left, are now dipped in the water at the same moment, and propelled by the powerful strokes of their strong arms, the little fairy shoots swiftly and gracefully forward on her course. In a few minutes the others are loaded. The boss or cook takes a careful look around to see that nothing has been forgotten, and we are off.

The shores of the river are here completely overhung by projecting cedars, alder, birch, and hemlock, with here and there the top of a fallen tree nodding and swaying, the lower limbs being submerged in the rippling water; while straight, tapering cedars, denuded of their limbs, but studded with sharp projecting knots, lie treacherously a few inches underneath the surface. It is the duty of the man in the bow to be constantly on the look-out for those hidden dangers, for a moment's carelessness may be the cause of a hole being pierced in the bow of the frail bark, or a sudden capsize, spilling both men and goods into the stream.

As we are now about entering a section of country which is the undisturbed home of the deer and moose, of the beaver and muskrat, the man of the party who is the best shot and has the quickest eye is selected for the bowman of the foremost canoe. The loaded rifle, or double barrel, one barrel loaded with ball, the other with No. 3 shot, is laid carefully, the butt between his knees and muzzle projecting upwards over the bow of the canoe, ready to be snatched up and fired at any moment. The occupants of the first canoe are instructed to keep at least a quarter of a mile in advance of the rest of the party.

At the distance of only a few chains above the starting-

point there is a short rapid, and we must be careful to shoot the canoe in between a projecting cedar top on the left and some slightly submerged boulders on the right. Right in our front little ripples on the water indicate the presence of other rocks, which must also be avoided; but a few skilful, swift strokes of the paddles, and we are gliding through the smooth waters above, the water curling up round the bow and gliding in tiny bubbles past the sides of the slim vessel.

At the end of a five minutes' paddle, a low, murmuring sound ahead denotes our approach to another rapid. There is a bend in the stream, and a few rods ahead a few tufts of tall grass, surrounded by the smooth, dark, water-worn shingle, are seen on the left. The river is rushing down in tiny wavelets over its stony bed on the right. We paddle gently up the right shore, assisted in our progress by the little eddy which is invariably found at the foot of every rapid. Now the paddling ceases altogether, and we glide slowly forward till a slight grating noise is heard underneath. The canoe has touched the bottom, and we are at a standstill. Our paddle is now pressed tightly on the bottom, and the paddle and gunwale of the canoe grasped firmly, with one hand holding her steadily in place, while the bowman, laying his paddle across the gunwale in front of him, rises slowly to his feet and steps lightly out into the water, firmly grasping at the same time the bow with his right hand. Here there is no waiting for orders; every one knows the part he is expected to perform, and is ready for it. He now pushes the bow gently out a little, so as to bring the stern into the shallow water in order that we also may step out without incurring the risk of getting wet. We can lead her up this rapid with her load, so, laying the paddles on top and taking hold, one at each end, we commence wading and guiding her up the stream.

The slightest touch on the bottom is easily and distinctly felt. Suddenly she comes to a full stop; her bow has run upon a hidden stone or tree root. A single glance shows us where there is sufficient water to float her. She is gently backed down a foot or two. We step a little further into the stream. We may get over the boot-tops or suddenly step into an unseen hole up to the waist, but what of that? The water is warm, and, in anticipation of such an accident, pipes, tobacco and matches have been stuck in the ribbon of our hats. In a few minutes we are at the head of the rapid, and our canoe lies safely by the side of the deep, still water.

We stand still for a few minutes to allow the water to drip from our wet bodies, then, leaning with one hand on our paddle, we raise one foot up behind and, taking hold of the toe of the boot, bend it up as far as we can, when the water pours out at the knee. A like performance with the other foot, and we get rid of as much of the water as has not been absorbed by our clothes. We again embark and have another half-hour's paddle along short stretches of almost still water, with occasional short, quick spurts where it rushes with accelerated speed round sharp bends. The stream is everywhere overhung with dark green cedar, hemlock and balsam, and here and there a soft maple, birch and clump of alder.

Here a naked trunk, which numerous spring floods with their loads of ice have completely denuded of both limbs and bark, and with root still firmly held on shore, is laid out far into the water, with only a few inches above the surface.

We observe a spot where a few chips have been knocked off the top and a short hardwood peg driven into the yielding water-soaked timber a few inches from it. What does this mean? It is where a trapper has set his steel trap the previous fall or spring to catch the little muskrat, and he will,

most likely, do so again as soon as the close season is over and the furred denizens of the forest have donned their winter garb of rich, glossy, frost-defying fur. The small ring at the end of the chain to which the trap is attached is passed over the little peg. The trap, after the spring has been set, is laid on the spot from where the chip has been cut. During the night Master Rat is in the habit of making a roost of this log, for what particular purpose man knoweth not. He incautiously sets his little foot on the spring. There is a sharp click, a sudden spring and plunge in the water, and he is hanging by the foot completely submerged. There is a brief struggle, and a drowned rat is dangling from the end of the chain. Next morning the trapper paddles up, the game is taken out, and the trap re-set for another victim. But how does our hunter know on which log to set the trap? As the partridge invariably drums on the same fallen tree, so does this denizen of the water return to the same log, which is easily distinguished from its fellows by the quantity of excrement left thereon.

But while surveying the log and discussing the method of taking the muskrat, we have forgotten the distance we have come. We are now entering the little bay, with a sudden bend to the right at the head of it, and another and somewhat larger one opens on the view. On entering this little bay the ears are greeted by the sudden noise of rushing waters, when, looking up, we see a little to the left, and at about ten chains' distance, a mass of water tumbling out of a small opening among the trees.

A few more strokes of the paddle, and there are the rest of our canoes lying at the head of the bay a short distance to the left. They have reached the landing at the foot of the first portage.

CHAPTER VII.

CAUGHT IN A THUNDERSTORM.

THERE is room only for one to land at a time, and while the first canoe is unloading the men are quietly resting in the others. As soon as the contents of the first have been tossed on shore, it is lifted out and placed bottom up a few yards from the shore to leave room for the others. We are quickly alongside. "What did you shoot, boys?" We had heard a shot a few minutes after the first canoe left. "Oh, it was only Jack firing at the fish-hawk nest on the top of the tall pine stump on the west shore a short distance above the first rapid." "Did he hit it?" "Well, he made the old lady leave and the young imps squeal at any rate."

In a few minutes everything is on shore, and with stooping heads and laden shoulders we wend our way across the level portage of a quarter of a mile or so, to the foot of Ox-Tongue Lake. We are now in the township of McClintock, having crossed the boundary between it and Franklin a short distance above the starting-point.

This being the first day of our canoeing, we had everything to arrange and were late in getting a start. For as every man has his own particular duty to perform, so every canoe has its own portion of the goods to carry, and by this arrange-

ment the danger of anything being left behind or forgotten is reduced to a minimum. By this time the sun has well-nigh reached the meridian, and we conclude we had better have dinner before re-embarking.

The pack of pails, henceforth termed the cookery, is taken over the first trip. While the cook unpacks, starts the fire and sets the tea a-going, the balance of the stuff is got over. Wet socks and clothing are taken off and hung up in the bright sunshine to dry, others being substituted in their places. "That biscuit barrel is an awkward load to carry. I don't mind the weight of the darned thing, but it cuts into a fellow's back so. Couldn't we put the biscuit in a bag and leave it here?" As we can see no reasonable ground for opposing this, we give our consent. The top is once more and for the last time taken out, and while one holds a bag two men speedily transfer the contents of the barrel. It takes two bags to hold the biscuits, and being emptied the [adjective] "birrel" is unceremoniously kicked to one side.

The tea is very soon ready, the boiled pork produced, when each one, a biscuit with a slice of pork on top in one hand, and a dish of hot, fragrant tea in the other, finds a seat in some shady nook to discuss the frugal but wholesome fare. Dinner is soon over, and while the cook is washing the dishes, stowing away the fragments and packing up, the after-dinner pipe is indulged in. While we are in full enjoyment of the fragrant weed, the sun is suddenly obscured. A low rumbling noise is heard in the north-west. A sudden wind begins to moan in fitful gusts amongst the tree-tops, and in a few minutes a thunderstorm will be upon us. Instantly every man is on his feet, for all know what is required in such a case. Two, axe in hand, are off into the woods for tent poles, some more are clearing off a sufficient space for the tent, another hastily

cutting and pointing tent pins, while still others are gathering the clothes which had been hung up to dry, and stowing a portion of the goods under the upturned canoes. In an incredibly short space of time the tent is up and everything made snug, and we watch the rapidly approaching storm.

In a few minutes it is upon us in all its fury. Dark masses of clouds are chasing each other in quick succession towards the south-east, rent by vivid flashes of forked lightning. Loud peals of thunder follow each other in rapid succession. The trees shake and bend before the fierce gale which is now raging. Fragments of limbs are torn off the trees and borne far out on the lake. The rain descends in torrents, but we are perfectly dry. Our light tent does not leak a drop.

In half-an-hour the brief but fierce storm is over, and the noonday sun is again out in all his glory. We step outside. A light shower is still falling in the woods from the surcharged leaves, while huge drops of water depending from the ends of limbs and sprigs of green moss are transformed into a myriad gems by the bright sunshine. The merry whistle of the gray Canada bird and the chickadee-dee of the little titmouse, as he hops from limb to limb, are heard on every side, accompanied by the chirrer of a red squirrel, seated saucily on a limb overhead with tail laid along his back.

A short half-hour and the well-stretched tent is again dry and formed into a pack, the canoes again loaded, and we are off.

Only a very small portion of Ox-Tongue Lake is visible from the landing, and as we paddle out from the shore we catch sight of the tossing waters of the rapid around which we have had to portage. Now a larger portion of lake opens upon the sight. Right in front is a hill densely covered with hardwood and hemlock, while a long, narrow bay extends

fully a mile to the south, terminating in a small, shallow, reed-covered marsh. We turn to the left in a northerly direction and steer for the head of the lake. Numerous small bays indent the shores, and the overhanging trees are beautifully mirrored in the water. Many huge trunks, with roots on shore and tops deeply sunk beneath the surface, are to be seen on every hand. A short distance from the landing we pass a sandy shore on our right, a favourite camping-ground of the deer hunters; but a recent fire, occasioned by a carelessly-left camp-fire, has robbed it of the greater portion of its pristine beauty. Right opposite, on our left, a hardy settler has cleared a few acres, put up his little house, and is endeavouring to hew out for himself and family a home. The house is surrounded by Indian corn, potatoes and vegetables. The oats growing in a small field, together with beaver hay, will furnish the winter's supply of food for his cow.

Gradually, as we get out into the open lake, we begin to feel the effects of the stiff nor'-wester, which—to use a nautical phrase—strikes right on the port beam. Our little vessel bobs up and down in the short, rough sea, and must be kept with her bow quartering to the waves to avoid being swamped in the trough between them.

Hitherto we have been seated on the thwarts, now we crouch low down in the bottom to lower the centre of gravity. Both eye and arm must now faithfully do their duty. A moment's carelessness or the missing of a single stroke at the proper moment may lead to irretrievable disaster. We must not paddle too hard, or we will drive her under, but keep steadily at it, and, as the huge swell comes rolling forward, lift her gently to it. The bow rises up, ships a few drops of water; the wave rolls under, lifting the stern, and she glides softly down on the other side and is ready for the next. Thus

we glide on up the lake, gradually approaching the west shore. We dare not look round; to do so might be fatal, for our canoe is a ticklish lady and demands all our attention. A buck is quietly looking on from beneath the spreading boughs of a projecting cedar; but he is perfectly safe, and seems to realize the fact that we have other business on hand which requires all our attention. We must forego the luxury of tempting venison steak till a more convenient season. The land in front is low and level, with a wide stretch of cedar swamp extending right down to the water's edge. A few tall balsams and still taller spruce, pine, and tamarack tower high above their fellows.

A mile or so in the rear is a range of high hardwood hills, extending away northerly in a line parallel to the shore. We are now well in with the land and out of the heaviest sea and are able to shape our course in a more direct line up the lake. Right in front is another long, narrow bay, extending for a mile-and-a-quarter beyond the head of the lake proper. At its head empties in a large brook, the outlet of Fatty's and Dotty's Lakes, each half as large as Ox-Tongue, which lie, the former in the township of Finlayson and the latter on the boundary between that and Sinclair. On the west side of this bay is a strip of rich, alluvial, hardwood land. On the east the shore is composed of high hardwood and pine-clad hills. We round a point and the clearing of another pioneer is before us. These are the last settlers on the river, and are eight miles distant from the nearest neighbour. With a last look at the little dwellings standing on that wild shore, we bid adieu to civilization. Getting abreast of the clearing, we are opposite the mouth of the river, to which we can now run across before the wind. We turn round to the right and, for the first time, catch a sight of the east shore. It is a series

of high hardwood hills, extending right down to the water's edge. In a little sand-fringed bay is a small abandoned clearing of an acre or two in extent. On our right is a low, birch-clad island, another favourite camping-ground for the deer hunter. For no part of the backwoods is more famous for the numbers or fatness of its deer than the maple-clad hills which surround Ox-Tongue, and the blood of many a noble buck and graceful doe has dyed its waters in response to the rifle crack, as the fugitives bravely stemmed the wave in their flight from the pursuing hound.

We pass to the right of another spruce-clad island, with its surrounding bed of water-lilies, and steer along the north shore, covered with stately red pine, with dense undergrowth of balsam and hazel. We glide swiftly and smoothly over the seething waters. No danger now, as we are running straight before the wind, and have only to keep the canoe steady and straight on her course. In a few minutes we are at the mouth of the river. An ugly swell is rolling, as the current meets the wind-tossed waters of the lake. With a few more strokes of the paddles we are in the smooth water beyond. We run into the west shore, and the man in the bow takes hold of a small, projecting alder and draws it underneath him. We rise gently up from our recumbent positions, and seat ourselves on the thwarts to ease our cramped limbs. The little vessel is now perfectly still, held in her place by the limb our bowman is sitting upon. Pipes are filled, and we take a smoke.

After a fifteen minutes' rest, the alder limb is let go and we are again under way up the river, paddling easily against the gently-flowing current. In a few minutes we pass to the left of a small dot of an island, which at a distance looks like a large alder bush, so completely is the land concealed and

the shore overhung by the dense foliage. The banks of the stream are of only a moderate height, and are covered with large pines, birch, and balsam; the dry land here comes right to the water's edge, then again retreats a short distance back, leaving a few rods of marsh, covered with alder and tall beaver grass, elevated only a few inches above the surface of the stream, and completely submerged at every freshet. Now we are gliding along a stretch of clear water. Anon through a mass of long water-grass, the tops swaying with the current. Now we pass over a stretch of deep water; again, all at once, it shallows up to only a foot or two in depth. Hist! there is something moving yonder close into the shore beneath the projecting boughs of yonder alder bush. We glance in the direction indicated, and there is a little brown head with sharp eyes moving swiftly up-stream, at a distance of only a few feet from the shore. A foot or so behind the head is a curved black object about the thickness of one's finger. Both ends are in the water, and the centre elevated a couple of inches above the surface in the form of a small arch. This is the tail of the little muskrat, the body being completely submerged. Suddenly both head and tail disappear, and he is off to his house underneath some projecting bank.

A little further on and we pass an alder floating down. It has been newly cut, for the leaves are quite green. We pause, and taking hold of it lift it out of the water. It looks as if it had been cut with a pocket-knife by some schoolboy. Every stroke of the knife—half-a-dozen or so—is distinct from each other. But a closer examination shows that the knife-marks, instead of being straight and smooth from the keen edge of the blade, are slightly rough and a little concave. It is the hand, or rather the tooth-work, of the beaver. The

alder has been cut probably with the intention of making it a part of next winter's supply of provisions; but by some oversight it has been allowed to float down the stream,—for beavers, like men, are occasionally careless,—and it is consequently lost.

Again we encounter some wands, or pieces of alder and birch, the bark completely stripped off, every tooth-mark of the animal being distinctly visible on the surface. On these master, or mistress, beaver has supped the previous evening. The animal lives exclusively on the bark of trees. The poplar is seemingly his favourite food, after which comes the alder and white birch.

Now we pass a large pile of alder and white birch saplings beneath the water, and close into the shore, where the soft alluvial bank has attained an elevation of a few feet above the surface of the water. This pile of brush is the beaver's supply of food for next winter, and he has burrowed a hole in the adjacent bank for his castle, the entrance to which is down deep beneath the surface of the water, thence sloping upwards, till it reaches the chamber in the interior of the dwelling, where it is both dry and warm. Here, if he is a new-comer, it has been the summer's work of himself and partner to prepare the home and gather the supply of provisions for the long and severe winter. Beavers never venture out while the river is frozen over, except to the brush-pile, when, after hauling a stick out of the water and eating off the bark, the trunk is again thrust out and allowed to float away. Here the wily trapper knows exactly where to set his trap, which he fastens to a picket driven into the bottom of the stream. It must be put down in such a position that the animal, when caught, will be unable to drag the trap on shore, or he will in a very few hours release himself by cutting off his foot. Should he

succeed in thus freeing himself, the wound quickly heals over, and it is no uncommon thing for beavers to be caught with both front feet gone, the fellow, like an old warrior, hobbling round upon his stumps. It is here also during the winter months that they bring forth their young.

A little over a mile above the lake, after having followed numerous sharp bends and windings, a roar of falling waters begins to be heard, gradually growing louder. The river narrows somewhat. We round a bend, where right in front is an inclined mass of dark shingle, with water boiling and bubbling through amongst the stones. We now turn abruptly to the right, and shoot swiftly across in front of the fall in a rapid froth-covered current. To the left the water is rushing down amongst the boulders and round the roots of some large hemlocks and elms. Half-a-dozen strokes, and we wheel suddenly to the left. The next moment our bow is up against the stones and we are at a standstill. We have reached the end of the portage at the foot of the Ragged Falls.

In a few minutes everything is on shore, the packs shouldered, and we are off over the portage of ten or twelve chains. It is rather steep and rough, and, owing to the ruggedness of the shore, we are compelled to ascend a considerable distance higher than what is actually necessary to overcome the difference in level of the water and again descend to the shore at the head of the chute.

Around a little bend in the river is an old camp-ground, and here, though it is still early, we will camp for the night, this being our first day out.

CHAPTER VIII.

NATURE—ANIMATE AND INANIMATE.

N half an hour everything is over the portage, and while camp is being pitched, we determine to have a look at the falls and see also if we cannot add to our larder a few of the trout that we think ought to be lurking amongst the eddies of the chute, although the water is now warm, and they will mostly have retired to the colder strata near the bottom of the lake. A small hook is quickly made fast to the end of a fine line ten or twelve feet in length, and, knife in hand, we are into the woods and have cut a maple sapling of the same length as the line. Securing also a piece of fat pork, we wend our way back to the foot of the falls, and, climbing up over the big boulders to where it takes its final leap, we find beneath some huge trunks of pine borne down by the spring freshets a deep, dark pool at the foot of a ledge of rock. On either side are high granite rocks, below which it spreads out somewhat and finally reaches the foot, or smooth water, by narrow channels amongst the loose stones. During the spring freshets or heavy rains of the fall it is a great, roaring flood, but now it is low water, and we ascend easily without wetting a foot. The water is boiling and churning in the pool, so that one would scarcely think even a trout could maintain its position

in the seething mass. Our line is quickly got ready, a small piece of pork stuck on the hook, and it is cast in. Scarcely has it sank beneath the surface, when there is a sudden jerk and quivering of the line. We give it a quick pull, and a speckled beauty is dangling in the air. Our pocket-knife is again quickly out, and a small crotched sapling is cut, the fish taken off the hook and one end of the crotch passed in through the gills and out at the mouth. Our first fish is thus secured and laid safely to one side. The bait is replenished and again cast in. There are a number of the pot-like holes similar to this, and they are all tried in succession.

Smile not, professional angler! who believes that trout can only be taken with the fly. We have seen many a fine string of little beauties caught in this manner. The fish seem to have dashed at the swiftly-moving bait and got caught before they felt the taste of this, to them, novel food. If, by any means, one of them has tasted it without getting hooked, you may bid him good-bye till you have something more tempting to offer.

Climbing over logs and stones, and casting the line into every pool or lump of froth as we pass, we make our way to the top of the falls, and finally regain the camp with a fine string of as lovely trout as one could desire. A half-dozen willing hands are quickly at work. The fish are cleaned and placed in the frying-pan along with the pork. In a few minutes supper is ready, and the scenes of the previous evening are enacted over again, while the merry jest and verse of song are heard on every side.

In due time all hands are in bed. The fire is beginning to burn low, and the conversation is all but hushed. The mellow light of the moon is playing hide-and-seek amongst the tree-tops, as they gently wave to and fro in the night

breeze. A night-owl is uttering his ho-oo-oo in a tree-top hard by the camp, and is answered by some belated member of the same family from the other side of the river. Suddenly we hear a crackling of dry sticks a short distance behind the camp. "Hist, boys; what is that?" The welkin is now awakened by a shrill something between the toot of a horn and a whistle—a sound easily imitated by the mouth, but one which we, at least, cannot describe with the pen. It is the whistle of a deer. Immediately one of our most ardent hunters—one only in theory, making his first trip into the wilds—is up and undoing the rifle from the tent-pole.

"Where are you going?"

"I am going to shoot that deer."

"Well, you had better take a grain of salt with you to put on his tail. He aint agoin' to stand there looking at you and the camp till you get near enough to shoot him."

Our amateur hunter is inclined to take this as something approaching an insult, and steps lightly out in bare feet, carefully, as he thinks, avoiding all dry limbs, and while avoiding one as surely steps on two others, and larger ones. At last he stops, thinking he must be nigh the game, when, after listening for full five minutes, another faint whistle is heard away in the distance. The deer has quietly walked off, no one knows how or when.

Our hunter now returns to the tent, grumbling in somewhat forcible language at having got his toes hurt by the brush. A half-hour is now passed in listening to thrilling tales of deer-hunting, or some wonderful exploits in tall shooting, when the conversation again gradually lags, and finally perfect silence reigns,—a silence and calmness which we have never experienced anywhere except in the deep woods, broken only by the occasional whistle of the Canada

bird or cry of the whip-poor-will, the chirp of the tree-frog, and roar of the adjacent falls.

It is another glorious morning, when, in response to the "Hurrah, boys; breakfast!" we emerge, towel in hand, from the tent. The air in the early morning in the dense woods seems as if it were possessed of a peculiarly invigorating freshness which we have never felt in any other place. In half an hour breakfast is over. It is no daintily-prepared meal of hot rolls, buttered toast, luscious beefsteak, and fresh eggs, washed down with well creamed and sugared tea or coffee, but dry biscuit, baked beans, and fried pork, with a top-dressing of cold apple-sauce, and a dish of tea. It was a meal we could not eat at home, but is just what we want here. And such a meal as we do make of it! Each man disposes of as much as would suffice for half a moderately-sized family in town or city! We have been considerably annoyed during the early morning by mosquitoes and black-flies, and the insidious and almost imperceptible sand-fly,—but this is an annoyance we all knew we had to put up with, and has scarcely been as bad as was represented.

Immediately after breakfast packing up is begun, and a stranger would think, from the apparent confusion in which everything is lying around, that half a day at least would be consumed in the process; but each man knows his own blanket and his own share of the heterogeneous mass, and in another half-hour the work is completed, and a number of neatly-tied packs are all that are to be seen. Not a single article has been overlooked or forgotten. The embers of the fire are carefully scraped together, and, before the cookery is packed up, deluged with water; the dry turf which surrounded the fire being carefully examined and thoroughly wetted to drown out any scattered embers, which, if over-

looked, might remain smouldering for days and then break out into flame and destroy many miles of valuable timber, besides materially damaging the land as well. This care is imposed upon us by an Act of the Provincial Legislature to prevent the spreading of bush fires in certain localities, and were we to neglect it, we would be liable to a heavy penalty.

A very few minutes suffice to load the canoes. Each is furnished with an axe, as we are likely to encounter newly-fallen trees or floodwood, through which we shall have to cut our way. In a few minutes we are off, giving short, vigorous strokes with the paddle. A short, quick stroke is preferable in a bark canoe to a long, steady pull, such as is best in a punt or skiff. Our little vessel is so light that as soon as the paddle is lifted out of the water her headway slackens, consequently the short, quick stroke is preferable to the long, steady one in a heavier vessel.

Here the current is much more swift than it was below the falls, especially around the bends and where the higher banks come right down to the water. But the practised eye of the steersman sees on which side of the stream is the slowest current, or the little returning eddy, which is quickly taken advantage of. In about twenty minutes we see ahead a perceptible fall, or rather miniature chute, of a dozen yards or so in length. The water is rushing through amongst the half-submerged shingle, a bar of which extends out from either side, leaving a narrow canal of smooth, swift water in the middle of the stream. Towards this narrow passage the water above, fan-like, converges, then rushes down in a smooth and unbroken sheet, till at the foot it meets the retiring eddy on each side, and dashes away down the centre of the stream in a narrow, rippling, heaped-up ridge, till, meeting the still, deep waters below, it spreads out, is ab-

sorbed, and vanishes. We gently propel our vessel up alongside this ridge till close to the foot of the barrier of stones, when quickly and deftly the canoe is shot into the centre. With a few skilfully-directed and vigorous strokes we dash right up the centre, and the next moment are skimming swiftly and gracefully over the still, deep waters above. A little further on and we are gliding over a smooth, pond-like expanse, with a narrow strip of low, alder-covered land, bordered at the water's edge with luxuriant reeds and coarse grass on either side. Another half-mile, and the water ahead is seen rushing swiftly but smoothly, broken only by tiny whirlpools, around a bend to the right. At the foot of this rapid we see a narrow opening in the woods at either side of the stream, extending in an easterly and westerly direction in a straight line. A blackened spot is seen on the trees that stand close to the open space, where pieces of the bark and timber have been hewn off. These marks are called "blazes," and have been made to mark the line; and this is the boundary or townline between the townships of McClintock and Finlayson.

Impelled by the quick and skilfully-plied strokes of the paddles, we quickly glide up the swift waters round the little bend. Here we must be doubly careful, for though we must ply both swift and powerful strokes, there are many large stones scattered all round, with only an inch or two of water above them. To strike against the sharp edge of one at this speed would be fatal to our light vessel. Another half mile, we have overcome one or two more of those little raceways, and are in another pond-like stretch, with its margin of alder-covered marsh to the left. We perceive ahead in the distance the stream flowing swiftly round a bend to the left, and tumbling over and through a bed of large shingle, elevated

a couple of feet or so above the level on which we are floating. We keep along up the shore on our right, straight for a little sharp bend in the bank, with an eddy just about large enough to hold a couple of canoes right at the foot of the tumbling waters, where we see some of our party engaged in unloading their canoes under a spreading birch.

The packs are again quickly transferred from canoes to shoulders. A three minutes' walk across a narrow neck of land, and we find ourselves again on the side of the river. To follow it round the bend would be a full quarter of a mile, up which it would be impossible to propel the canoes.

Here we meet the swiftly-flowing river at right angles. During the spring floods it is a rushing, roaring stream of ten or twelve rods in width, and at least twelve feet deep; now it is confined to a narrow channel of some sixty feet along the north bank. The remainder of the channel is now dry shingle, amongst which are many tufts of lovely tall ferns. Above this the stream comes in abroad, shallow body round a bend from the east, and is spread out over the whole channel. The end of the portage on the other shore is directly opposite, and, as the water is too deep to wade, the canoes are again launched, and all are ferried across. This is the foot of the High Falls portage, and once more we trudge off beneath our loads. For a short distance the narrow path is level, and cuts off a short bend of the river, glimpses of which we catch to the right, through amongst the trees. Now we are on the shore and ascending the side of a hill. A dull roar ahead has been gradually increasing, till at last, on reaching the top of the ridge, the noise becomes deafening. We lay down the packs to draw our breath and enjoy the view. Stepping to the brow of the bank we catch our first sight of the "High Falls." Away a few chains to

the east, and at about the same level on which we are standing,—for we are now many feet above the level of the river,—a dark body of water is seen rushing apparently right past the sharp angle of a perpendicular granite cliff. It dashes down the narrow iron-bound channel, in two or three quickly succeeding leaps, full forty feet into an almost round basin bordered by shelving rocks; then gliding round to the other shore, rushes along the base of a perpendicular cliff, fringed on top with cedar, hemlock, and pine. Pieces of white froth at short intervals become detached from the mass at the foot of the fall, and twirl and bob away down the stream. They are now momentarily arrested by a projecting ledge of rock, or caught by an overhanging limb of a tree; then shooting swiftly down a smooth stretch, are finally lost in the distance, where, being deprived of the churning powers beneath, the upper bubbles gradually collapsing, after playing around for a short time in some little eddy, become gradually absorbed in the surrounding water.

Returning, we resume our loads. Advancing by a crooked path up another elevation, then across a gully, which extends by a narrow gap between the rocks, down to the foot of the falls, we emerge on an old camp-ground, a rod or two in extent, by the side of the river above the falls. The whole portage has a length of perhaps thirty chains. After a drink of ice-cold water out of a little spring we have discovered in the rocky gulch we have just crossed, and a ten minutes' indulgence in the amber-tipped briar-root, we are again off to the lower end of the portage for another load; in an hour or so everything is up to this point.

The stream for the next sixty rods is so shallow and full of stones that we find it more convenient to carry our goods up along the north bank for that distance; and so, resuming

the packs, we wend our way along a path we had brushed out on a former trip, and deposit the burthen by the side of the still waters, on a grassy plot beneath a drooping balsam. In a little while everything is got there except one light load, and by this time our cook has the tin pail full of fragrant boiling-hot tea, flanked by a pile of biscuit and plate of boiled pork, cut into large slices, and laid out on an empty bag for a table-cloth, awaiting us.

As usual, we are ready for dinner. Seldom, indeed, are the words, "I am not at all hungry," heard when we are once fairly at work. Talk of your horn of brandy or glass of gin to whet the appetite! We have been vigorously plying the paddle, trudging over the rough portage, bending beneath a heavy load, breathing the pure air of heaven, and when thirsty drinking the pure water of the river. Our brows, nay, our whole bodies, have been "wet with honest sweat" ever since early morn. What need have we of any drink, of that soul and body destroying element which man's ingenuity has manufactured out of the fruits of the earth which God gave for wholesome bread, to give us a relish for our food? The vigorous attack on the plain, but strong, diet shows whether we are hungry or not, and the pail is quickly drained of its last drop.

After dinner we take a look at the falls from the top, which is only a few steps off. Here, immediately above the fall, the river is between two and three chains wide, when suddenly the shores turn almost at right angles to the stream, and the water approaches in a smooth, deep, dark, unruffled mass to the very brink, where it is only a little over thirty feet wide; then it suddenly dashes from ledge to ledge away into the swirling eddy beneath. A mimic Niagara! what a spot for trout in the early spring, or late in the fall, when the

fish come up out of the deeper waters of the lake. An hour's rest, and perhaps a five minutes' siesta—for the drowsy god is very apt to steal upon one as he reclines, pipe in mouth, beneath the shade of a friendly balsam. We had no intention of going to sleep. We did not think we were asleep till suddenly we start up from a state of obliviousness to find the pipe has slipped from our mouth. There it is lying amongst the leaves where it dropped as the soothing deceiver stole upon us.

By this time the cook has everything that had been loosed again packed up. The loads are tossed upon the shoulders, and away we go. A few minutes suffice to reload the canoes, and once more we are under way.

Another short paddle over comparatively still water, a few swift, strong strokes up another short rapid, a sudden bend to the right, and we reach another short, rough spot, but by keeping close to the right bank of the stream we are able to thread our way amongst the stones by paddling and pushing alternately. A five minutes' paddle brings us to another difficult place, but this time there is only a very short portage on the south side. It is only three or four chains in length, and everything is quickly across. One of the canoes has been butted against a stone at the last rapid, and a small leak is the result. A few shreds of bark are torn from a neighbouring birch, and laid out on the dry shingle in the bed of the river, some dry limbs broken and laid on top, and a lighted match applied. While one holds the ever ready gum-dish over the flame, others turn up the canoe, when a careful survey reveals the small leak. The surrounding bark is carefully wiped dry, then a burning brand is held over it, and by the time the gum is melted the bark is thoroughly dry. This is absolutely necessary, for the gum will

not adhere to the bark if the latter is at all wet when it is applied. In a couple of minutes the craft is once more water-tight. The packs are again laid carefully in their places. Extra care is taken this time to make the seats comfortable, for it is a long pull to the next portage, and if we encounter much floodwood and have long delays in consequence, it may be camping-time before we can reach it.

We now glide smoothly and noiselessly along a deep, dark stream, upwards of two chains in average width, frequently pulling through heavy banks of long water-grass. In many places the current is scarcely perceptible. The river is very crooked: now the sun is directly on our back, then on the left, again on the right hand; anon another sharp bend brings it almost directly in our faces, and the prow is pointed to every point of the compass in rapid succession. Here we are able to steer straight from point to point on alternate sides of the stream; there we must run half across the river to avoid the bushy top of a fallen balsam or spruce at some narrow bend. Everywhere the shore is lined right down to the water with overhanging alders and balsams, their lower limbs submerged; and there are tall pines and spruce in the background. There, on the north shore, is a high hill, clothed with a dense covering of heavy hardwood, a short distance back from the river. It is soon left behind, but after another half-hour's pull it is again almost directly in front, seemingly as near as it was before. Another sharp turn to the east, and we bid it a final good-bye. "Hist! there is a duck just at yonder point." We paddle gently up. Our bowman with gun in hand is ready for a shot. There she is! a shell-duck with a dozen young ones no bigger than your fist. They now discover our approach. There is a sudden dash, and away they go, the old lady leading, fol-

lowed closely by the little gray mites. Swiftly they dash along, faster than we can follow. Scarcely anything is visible save half a dozen streaks of sparkling white water. They are soon out of sight, and are seen no more, having diverged into some one of the numerous small lagoons which open out at short intervals all along the shore where the surrounding country is swampy.

There, right ahead, is the naked trunk of a great lofty pine, its roots resting against one shore, the top sticking against the other. It has been uprooted and brought down during the high water, and by some means swung athwart the stream, there to remain, either to be released by the next freshet or form the key-log of a mass of floodwood, gradually increasing in size, as tree after tree is brought down, and added to the pile. We cannot get round either end, but the centre of the tree is submerged, and we may be able to run over it. We paddle slowly up and find there is only two or three inches of water above the trunk at the deepest part, not nearly enough to float the canoe, deeply laden as she is. She is laid alongside. We step lightly out on the submerged tree, then bringing the bow up with one of us on either side, she is easily lifted over. We again step in, lay hold of the paddles, and resume our course. Before going much further another obstruction is met with. This time a dozen or more trees have got locked together, completely blocking the channel. The thickly growing alders overhang the mass of timber on both sides, and before we can begin to make a passage some of them must be cut out of the way. One of us is quickly on shore, and the little craft is made fast to a projecting limb. The obstructing bushes are soon cut and tossed into the water. After ten minutes' work with axe and long pole, cutting, parting and pulling, a narrow passage is cleared

between the mass of floating timber and the shore, and pushing the canoe up the opening, we once more embark and are off.

We are now skirting along by the side of a stretch of burnt land on our left. A dense mass of poplar and white birch, intertwined with red raspberry and thimbleberry bushes, completely cover the ground. Amongst these bushes are numerous tall blackened trunks of half-burnt pine and birch, varied by an occasional green top which has escaped the devouring element. The fire has taken place some ten or twelve years ago, and has been caused by the carelessness of some deer-hunter or trapper.

Another mile along the winding stream and we pass the mouth of a river coming in from the south side, nearly half as large as the one we are ascending. This is called the South Branch, and has its source some ten or fifteen miles to the south-east in the township of Livingstone. After passing this point we are for some distance clear of the marshy ground, and for the rest of this day's travel, at least, the current is much more strong, and our progress correspondingly slower. Besides, there are more frequent interruptions with tree-tops and masses of floating timber. The sun is now getting low in the west; it is nearing six o'clock, and all hands are on the lookout for *a proper* spot to pitch camp for the night.

The river banks are here formed of either sandy loam or stiff clay with points of rock sticking out at short intervals, and have a perpendicular height of from six to ten feet. At length we reach a spot where the land rises less abruptly from the water, and turn into the shore. An old and experienced hand leaps out and up the bank. For perhaps a couple of minutes he is out of sight. He then returns to the top of the bank with the welcome announcement: "This place will do very well, boys."

CHAPTER IX.

A WET DAY IN CAMP.

N five minutes everything is on shore. The canoes are taken out and turned bottom up, and every man is busily employed at his allotted portion of work. In less than an hour the tents are pitched, the beds prepared, and everything made snug for the night. Our heavy boots having been removed, we are seated round on moss-covered logs, or reclining on the fragrant boughs of balsam, awaiting supper.

So far our only bread has been biscuit or hard tack, and there is now a general desire for a change. The cook has passed the word that if we will but have a little patience he will make pancakes for supper. This offer is hailed with delight. A pail of water is hung over the fire, the necessary quantity of flour emptied into the big tin dish, to which a handful of salt is added, and the requisite portion of hot water, and the mass stirred with a spoon into a thin batter.

Meanwhile half a bake-kettleful of pork has been frizzling and frying; it is now done, the meat lifted out and placed in a plate, and the boiling grease put in another, a quantity of the flour batter poured in, and the kettle again placed on the fire. In a few minutes the underside is done, when it is divided into quarters by the big butcher knife, carefully

turned and replaced on the fire. A few minutes more and it is thoroughly cooked. The pieces taken out, and a quantity of grease poured in, the bottom again covered with the batter, and the same process gone through with till the cooking of the whole mass is accomplished. The vigorous attack, complimentary remarks, and the empty plates bear ample testimony to the quality of the food. Supper over and dishes washed, it is proposed to have some cakes for breakfast. Another visit is made to the bag of flour, and the necessary quantity, together with salt and water, emptied into the dish. This time a small portion of baking-soda is added, and the whole kneaded into dough. Both bake-kettle and frying-pan are this time called into service, carefully wiped clean, then rubbed over with grease to prevent the cakes from sticking to the metal. A piece of the dough is laid in, carefully kneaded and flattened out on the bottom with the hand, for here there is neither rolling-pin nor bakeboard. It is surprising how few articles we find absolutely necessary for our work, and how many heretofore deemed indispensable are discarded and done without. A few coals are drawn out from underneath the fire, the bake-kettle set on them, and the lid ornamented with a light covering of the same material. The frying-pan is propped up in a slanting position before the fire, with a shovelful of coals thrown down behind it. Care must be observed that the cooking process is not done too hurriedly, or a sodden, half-cooked cake, with almost impenetrable crust, will be the result of the labour. But our cook is master of the position, and in an incredibly short space of time a dozen rich, light-brown cakes, the scones of our early childhood, and bannocks of the North-West, are ranged around cooling against trees and logs.

During the last hour the sky has been gradually becoming

overcast. The cry of the large black woodpecker has been heard at short intervals all day. Low gusts of wind are sweeping up from the south, and moaning among the tree-tops. The flies, during the last half-hour, have become much more troublesome, while the tree-frogs are keeping up an almost continuous chirping. The smoke from the fire, instead of rising in graceful spiral columns, and melting away above the trees, is floating in heavy masses down the river, and everything betokens the unmistakable approach of rain. It will be no sudden summer thunder-shower of only an hour or two's duration, but a steady, even downpour, which may detain us where we are for the whole of to-morrow. Our small dishes are piled bottom up with the larger on top. The canoes are all right, for they were laid bottom up when we landed. Care is taken to see that each part of the tent is evenly stretched, while every article that water can at all injure is put in a dry place. Nothing must be allowed to touch the canvas, or the water will soak through it. Everything is soon housed. The sides of the front part of the tent, hitherto turned back and left open, are drawn together and laced, and we sink to rest. There is no noise of tumbling waters for a lullaby to-night, for the slowly flowing river rolls noiselessly past; but we are lulled to sleep by the moaning of the wind among the giant mountain pines; grandest of music, and old as the everlasting hills.

About midnight we are awakened by the pattering of the heavy drops of rain overhead. The wind has risen to a gale, and is now howling through the trees. In a short space of time it is a steady downpour, now falling almost perpendicularly; again in a slanting direction, borne by the varying blast. "Lie over, Hank; I am jammed right against the tent, and my shoulder is wet through," exclaims one suddenly-

awakened sleeper. "By Jove, I left my socks outside to dry by the fire; I guess I had better bring them in," says another. As the speaker hastily rises and stumbles out into the darkness he is followed by the request to bring in a forgotten pair of pants from one quarter, and a shirt or hat from another. In a very brief space of time he returns, with such of the articles as he has been able to lay his hands on in the pitchy darkness. And, while securing a pair of half-dried socks or pants, he has succeeded in getting his own shoulders and feet completely soaked. He stumbles in, stepping on some leg or foot, evoking from the unfortunate owner sundry expressions most emphatically uttered, but hardly fitted for ears polite, and which always look bad in print. In two or three places heavy drops of water are falling from the tent. A match is now struck, and a sperm candle lighted, as we always carry a supply, and have one left convenient to the hand every night on retiring, to be ready in case of an emergency. The leaks are occasioned by small twigs or leaves which have fallen on the canvas. These are knocked off, when the drops at once cease. A careful survey of the interior is now made, and sundry articles that have moved are readjusted. The guns, which had been tied muzzle up, are reversed, in order to ensure no water getting into the barrels. Pipes are lit all round and a midnight smoke is indulged in. A half-hour's conversation and badinage ensues. The subject recalls some reminiscences of a similar night spent on some lonely island or river shore. The candle is extinguished, and all is again hushed in slumber's soft calm.

With the first gray streak of dawn we are attacked by myriads of mosquitoes and black-flies. They are always worst either immediately before or during rain. In a few minutes all hands are awake and stirring. We step to the

door, undo the fastenings and look out. What a contrast between this morning and yesterday!

Then, we were greeted with the whistling of the "Little bird with bosom red," the merry chirping of the squirrel as he gambolled from bough to bough, or chased his mate round the gnarled trunk of a neighbouring birch, the shrill cry of the blue jay, and other kindred songsters; while the tree-tops were turned a bright golden yellow by the first rays of the rising sun. Now all animated nature is hushed. A wild gale is howling among the trees, threatening wreck and ruin to many a stately forest monarch.

The rain is descending in torrents. The surface of the river is tossing and tumbling in a million little globules, as the big descending drops of rain strike the water. A heavy, dark, impenetrable veil is hanging over all, with thin fleecy patches of clouds scudding before the raging gale. A thick, whitish mist is hanging low amongst the trees and over the river. Everything betokens a wet day.

The flies are almost beyond endurance. A man steps outside and after a short search succeeds in getting a handful of dry chips and bark. The door of the tent is again closed, a small space of ground cleared at the back end and a fire started. As soon as the dry chips have kindled into a blaze, damp moss and leaves are laid on top. The flame is at once extinguished and replaced by a dense cloud of smoke. This is what woodmen call a "smudge," and no variety of the fly family can live in it,—and neither can man while it is so dense. So the door is again opened, and a thick volume rolls out, and with it also the flies. One or two with towels, or hat, in hand, drive them from the corners. The smudge is now reduced to more moderate dimensions, so that it will give forth only a light smoke in which we can breathe without

much inconvenience, and we resume our couch for another snooze. Our sleep is not of long duration, however, for the cravings of hunger are felt, and we must eat. The cook, enveloped in a waterproof, soon has the tea-kettle merrily boiling. We must all bestir ourselves, for it is the rule of the camp that none shall eat until he has performed his morning ablutions.

The blankets are carefully rolled up to prevent their being trodden upon by dirty boots. A hasty toilet is performed, and we are ready for breakfast. The rich steaming mass of baked beans is set down on the brush in our midst, flanked by the pail of tea and pile of bannocks. Our ever-thoughtful cook had made provision the previous evening for the protection of the bake-kettle from the anticipated rain by placing a log on each side of the "pot-hole," and laying on top of them a sheet of bark stripped from a neighbouring hemlock, to prevent the fire from being drowned out. Breakfast is soon disposed of, and we recline at our ease patiently awaiting the ceasing of the rain. But reclining in perfect idleness is what we can only endure for a very limited period. In a short while a pack of cards is produced by one, and a euchre party is quickly formed. A few who are fond of reading unearth from some mysterious corner a book or two; while others, needle in hand, are at work replacing a lost button, mending a torn shirt, a pair of dilapidated pants, or darning a sock. Another, who had not taken the precaution to have tacks put in the soles of his boots before leaving home, has made the discovery that the smooth soles are rather slippery when wading amongst the wet stones. This intelligence is communicated to the company in general, as he ruefully compares the covering of his pedal extremities with those of his more thoughtful companions. "I have a

box of Hungarian tacks," says one, "and will give you some." The offer is gladly accepted, and he is speedily at work driving them in with the pole of our lightest axe. The work is not such as would be turned out of a first-class shoemaker's shop; but they are at least driven well home, and will answer the purpose very well, though the rows may be a little irregular.

About nine o'clock the rain slackens; the weather begins to clear, and there are some prospects of a fine day yet, as small rents are seen in the dark mass of overhanging clouds. All hands step outside to have a look. The mist has risen to the tree-tops, and is hanging in white wreaths; small detached portions are still higher, while the wind has become almost entirely hushed. Those who are on their first trip volunteer the opinion that the rain is over; but the older hands know better, for long experience has taught them that when the mist ascends after rain it is sure shortly to descend again in more rain.

So the cook is informed that we shall not move to-day, or at least not before noon, and he will have time to make a pot of pea-soup, and also to boil some rice for dinner. The predictions as to the weather are soon verified. The rent clouds close up. Once again the wind is howling through the woods; and down comes the rain heavier than ever, and we gladly return to our snug quarters inside. There is another lull in the storm between eleven and twelve o'clock, and again about one, during which we partake of the plate of rich and wholesome soup, with a top-dressing of rice pudding and bannocks, and the never-overlooked dish of tea.

The weather is now settled down to a steady afternoon's rain. The wind has entirely gone down, and perfect silence, save only the pattering of the rain on tent and leaves, reigns.

The afternoon is spent in chaff and chatter, interspersed by an occasional song. The cards are kept steadily going, one party succeeding another in rapid succession; while the consumption of tobacco is something beyond all conception.

A wet day is the only one that seems long in camp, and the hours drag wearily along. About four o'clock the steady pour of the last three hours gradually begins to slacken, and by another hour small spots of deep blue sky are becoming visible. There is a general lighting-up in the west. A beautiful rainbow is seen against an eastern hill. The merry whistle of birds and the chirping of squirrels are again heard. The whole western hemisphere is now clear, and the sun is setting in all his glory; while yonder dark mass of clouds is moving slowly but steadily towards the east. The dark foliage of the woods seems to have put on a darker and richer green, and all nature seems to rejoice at having had its thirst quenched by the refreshing rain. By sundown the last vestige of cloud has disappeared. Gradually the shades of evening gather around, and countless hosts of twinkling stars begin to shine on the sleeping face of nature; while myriads of fire-flies are emitting their flashes of light in all directions. We retire to rest in the full confidence of a bright to-morrow.

The heavy mist which has risen from the wet surface of the earth is being slowly dispelled by the rising sun, as we emerge from our tent in the early morning. Every small tree and bush seems to have been invaded during the night by a host of spiders, and is almost completely covered by their webs, which are glinting in the sunshine. A gentle, invigorating breeze is blowing up the river, lifting and driving before it the heavy banks of mist from the surface of the water. Breakfast is speedily disposed of, and the packs done up; but the tent is saturated with water, and will require to be

dried before being folded up. A big fire is made. The crutches which support it are driven into the ground a few feet from the fire, one at each end, and the ridge pole laid on top. Over this the tent is spread, and in charge of two men to guard against its being burned. It is turned as soon as one side has been dried, and in less than half an hour is perfectly dry.

CHAPTER X.

HUNTING—SUCCESSFUL AND UNSUCCESSFUL.

BY seven o'clock everything is on board, and once more we are stemming the current of the river. The canoes are bounding lightly on their course, the water parting before them, giving forth a light swish as they dart forward at each stroke of the paddle. The river becomes more crooked than it was below this point, and the current more swift, especially as it circles round the sharp bends. Now we are passing a sandbank, covered on top with rank, coarse grass by the side of a small lagoon which extends a chain or two from the river. It is literally covered with deer tracks. But what are those as large as those made by oxen, and sunk deep into the sand? There are no domestic cattle here. They are the footprints of the lordly moose, the largest of all the wild animals of the continent, for we are now within his haunts. After an hour's lively pulling, and rounding another sharp bend to the left, we see, a few rods ahead, the whole channel completely choked with the white trunks of trees, from the large pine to the small alder. We have a couple of times this morning already had some difficulty in getting past a single tree, but managed to make our way without having to get out. But this time the fact of there being a well-defined

portage to the right is proof positive that we must unload. We step on shore, where we get a better view of the mass of timber. The whole channel is filled for fully twenty rods with all sizes and varieties of trees, logs, etc., piled together in every conceivable shape, and in most places solid to the bottom, the water boiling and bubbling amongst them.

Those masses of driftwood will frequently remain in one spot for years; then perhaps the whole will move down to the next bend, or portions of it will be loosened, and move down to form separate jams at other points. What we found last year as one large mass we may now meet in three or four different places, with spaces of clear river between. Each mass creates a new and unexpected obstruction, rendering it impossible to make the estimated distance in a day.

Three-quarters of an hour is consumed in making this portage, reloading, and getting a fresh start. In half an hour a similar obstruction bars our way, when there must be another getting out and portaging across the point of land—for those masses of floodwood are almost invariably met with at bends in the stream. We reload, and once more the paddles are plying swiftly and our little vessels are bounding gaily along the quickly-flowing river. Now we are avoiding an overhanging limb, and then we have to evade a sunken snag, one end of which is resting on the bottom, the other on a level with the surface, its presence only indicated by a slight ripple in the water.

It is the special duty of the man in the bow to guard against those hidden dangers, for nothing will more speedily or irretrievably ruin a canoe than to strike—when sailing fast—against the sharp point of one of those hidden snags. Another ten minutes' pull, and the roar of falling water is heard, gradually increasing in loudness as we approach. A bend

opens out a small pond of an acre or two in extent. We keep along near the shore to our left, skirting a thin fringe of tall reeds. As in nearly all similar spots, a small creek is winding its way into the river through a border of alders.

We see a tall, long-legged, long-necked, and long-billed bluish-coloured bird standing in the shallow water near the head of the bay. It is a crane engaged in the enjoyment of its morning meal on luckless frogs and small fish which may come within reach. We have hardly entered the little bay when its quick eye detects our approach. One quick glance satisfies him that the moving objects are most to be admired when seen at a distance, and for his own safety he had better be moving. There is a quick bending of the long, dark brown legs till the body nearly touches the water, then a sudden spring and unfolding of the long wings, and he rises almost perpendicularly into the air. The long limbs hang straight down till a sufficient altitude has been attained, then they are drawn up and project straight out behind; the long neck assumes a similar position in front, and with slow and steady flaps of the huge wings, the stately bird sails slowly away up the valley of the river.

But his sudden flight has alarmed another feathered denizen of the water, which has hitherto been concealed among the tall reeds. There is a quack, quack, a whirr of wings, and a big black duck is speeding quickly after the crane. Its young ones, whose wings are not sufficiently developed to support in air their fat bodies, are scudding to cover, warned by the cry of the fleeing parent that danger is nigh. A few of them would prove a welcome addition to our larder, for, though unable to fly, they are more than half-grown; but with all our woodcraft we might spend a whole day, and then fail to discover the retreat of a single one of them.

On the right, and away up at the head of the bay, we see the white water tossing and tumbling over great boulders, a few green alders and ferns forming a small island in the centre. We are soon in the little eddy, and are borne gently up to the landing at the foot of the short portage. It is the old story over again. The stream dashes through a narrow gorge, formed by projecting rocks on either side, which contract it to less than one-fourth of its average breadth, and for a distance of four or five chains it dashes and tumbles over a fall of eight or ten feet. In the next half-mile we have two more of those short portages, besides one where, by moving a few stones, we can lead the canoes up the short chute without unloading.

By the time we are over the last portage sundry cravings and a feeling of emptiness in the region of the belt warns us that our inner man requires replenishing. And as there is now a long stretch of uninterrupted navigation before us, we conclude to take dinner before again embarking. Wet socks are replaced by dry ones, and one or two small leaks attended to while the tea-pail is being boiled.

At the end of the usual hour for dinner we once more get off. Our best shot is given a ten minutes' start. For this is not only the hottest season of the year, but it is also the time when the flies are at their worst, and both deer and moose come out of the thick woods and stand and wade in the shallows alongside the frequent fringe of tall beaver-grass that lines the shores. The moose are fond of the large leaves of the water-lily, which almost completely conceal the surface of the water. The stream is now for some distance much wider, and has a slower current; and at a little distance the high, dry banks give place to low, muddy shores, covered with alder and balsam.

Hearing the report of a gun ahead, and quickening our stroke as we round a bend, we perceive the canoe lying in by the shore with only one man in her. In answer to our query we are informed that, on rounding the last bend, a large moose had been seen standing in the water and feeding on the water-lilies. They had stolen up as near as they could without alarming him. When Jack fired, the huge brute had stumbled to its knees, and then springing up, dashed off in amongst the alders, and Jack is now off in pursuit of the noble game.

The canoes are quickly run in, and all hands leap on shore. There are the large, ox-like tracks sunk deep in the soft mud, and we also are off along the trail. It is easily followed, even without looking down to the tracks, for the great brute has made a wide opening in his hurried retreat through the thick mass of alders. He is wounded, sure enough, for there are the fresh blood stains on the green leaves. We are soon clear of the alders, and ascending the side of a pine-clad hill. It is easy following the trail by the big hoof-prints and the sticks and leaves dashed aside in the hurried rush, and by the big drops of fresh blood. We have only gone a short distance further when Jack is met returning for instructions as to whether he shall continue the chase.

A hurried consultation is held. He informs us that he fired at the neck, expecting either to cut the jugular vein or break its neck. But the fact of its having risen at all after being shot is demonstrative evidence that the neck has not been broken, and by the way it is bleeding it is equally evident that the jugular vein has not been injured. It is consequently only a flesh wound, and not at all likely to prove fatal; therefore to follow it would be a wild-goose chase. The moose, when thoroughly alarmed, will trot continuously

for many hours without stopping. Besides, a red deer would be preferred at present, for only a small portion of the six or seven hundredweight of dressed carcass of the moose could be disposed of by our small party before the remainder would be spoiled at this season of the year. We could easily make use of a whole red deer before any of it could become tainted. Jack is duly cautioned not to fire again unless he is sure he can lodge the bullet in a vital part, and is then given another ten minutes' start.

After traversing another half mile, on rounding a bend, our hunters are again overhauled, resting on their paddles. They inform us that they have seen another moose, but as his position was not such as would ensure a fatal shot from the canoe they had not fired, although less than half gun-shot distance. "What did he look like, boys?" "Oh, a great big brute of a dark gray colour, as large as a horse, with a big, clumsy head, thick, heavy lips, and ears like a mule's."

Another half-mile, and another little spurt at a short rapid, and again smooth water, the shores still lined by the ever-present alder and balsam; now also we see occasionally a clump of willows and high cranberry bushes. A few miles of this, and the hard, dry land begins again to gradually close in to the edge of the water, rising to low hills and knolls, timbered with pine and white birch, with here and there a mountain ash, the rowan tree of Scotland—

> How fair art thou in simmer time,
> Wi' a' thy clusters white;
> How rich and rare thy autumn dress,
> Wi' berries red and ripe.

Now we have before us a short straight stretch of river between high sandy banks. The water is flowing with a swift current, and all our strength has to be put forth to propel the little vessel against it. In a little while we are at the foot of

a short rapid; part of the load is landed and carried up a few rods to the smooth water above. Returning, we step into the water and lead the canoe up with the balance of the stuff. The eastern boundary of the township of Finlayson crosses the river in the middle of this rapid, and we are now in the township of Peck. Another five minutes' paddle brings us to another floodwood portage. Like the others, it is soon overcome. Here the river well retains its width, but it is visibly becoming more shallow. Numerous water-logged trees with dangerous projecting limbs encumber the bottom, and are half-covered with sand.

For the next mile our progress is very slow, owing to the numerous fallen trees. Here we have to shove through between the end of one and the shore, there lift over another, or cut a piece out of a third. A sudden quack, quack, and another duck is darting off up the stream, while a dozen young ones, nearly as large as their parents, are hurrying to and fro endeavouring to conceal themselves among the floating timber. A quick shot is taken, and a couple, after briefly sputtering and floundering, are floating dead on the water. All the others have suddenly and mysteriously vanished, we know not where, but a ten minutes' search fails to discover a single head. The dead are picked up, and are found to be plump and fat, and will be an agreeable addition to the supper table.

In a little while our ears are again saluted with the noise of falling water as the river, hemmed in between overhanging cliffs, dashes over an obstructing ledge. We paddle in amongst the stones at the end of the portage on the north shore, and land at the foot of "Whiskey Falls." The sun is now sinking low in the west, our watches are consulted, and, to our surprise, we find the hands indicate six o'clock. It is

time to camp. Between paddling and pushing we have covered a good distance during the day; all are tired and also, as a matter of course, hungry.

In a very few minutes everything is on shore, and each man at his allotted task in getting up the tent and putting everything in order for the night. Along a perpendicular cliff on the opposite shore is a deep eddy dotted over with lumps of white froth. There ought to be trout there, close in to the foot of the fall. In a few minutes a hook and line are rigged, and launching a canoe we paddle across to the foot of the eddy, then floating up, step out on a half-submerged stone. By the time the work on the tents is finished, and the pork for supper is frying, a half-dozen speckled beauties are flopping about in the bottom of the canoe, and we again embark and re-cross to camp. The ducklings have been plucked, cleaned, and quartered. Our fish are soon cleaned and all deposited in the boiling grease, after the pork has been taken out. Before putting in the trout they are rolled in flour, and while cooking a little salt and pepper are added. This may not be the orthodox method of cooking young ducks and fresh trout, but before you condemn it, gentle reader, just try one of the fish or a leg of duck; if you will then say you ever tasted anything more delicious, or made a heartier meal, we will admit the cooking a failure. By this time the bannocks have been all disposed of, and we are down again to the never-failing and ever-ready hard-tack. But, as the evening is fine, the cook has time to prepare a pot of rice for to-morrow's breakfast in addition to the apple-sauce and pork.

There is no idling or dozing in bed in camp for two or three hours after sunrise. We retire with the first gray dusk of evening now that we are fairly in harness. And the first rays of the rising sun are just beginning to gild the upper limbs of the giant pines when all are again astir.

During the night an awakened sleeper had heard a partridge drumming a short distance behind the tent. He is again heard while we are engaged at our toilet. A man picks up the double-barrel, and steals quietly away in the direction of the noise. He proceeds a few rods, then pauses to listen for a repetition of the sound, to find out which of the numerous upturned trees the gay Lothario has chosen on which to sound his love-notes. In a few minutes the drumming is repeated, and before the swiftly moving wings have ceased their motion, the quick eye of the woodman has located the spot. There he is on yonder old pine. The gun is at once brought to the shoulder, for one is generally within shooting distance before he gets sight of the game in those thick woods. The echoes of the report reverberate among the rocks. There goes a shower of feathers. The bird tumbles headlong to the ground; there is a brief fluttering of wings and kicking of the feet, and the man triumphantly returns with the first partridge shot by the party.

CHAPTER XI.

CANOE LAKE AND NATURALIST NOTES.

AS usual, but a very brief period suffices to dispose of breakfast and packing up. Packs and canoes are shouldered, and we are off across the short portage. Heavy drops of dew are showered down upon us from hazel-bush and alder, as we brush along the narrow path. Here the landing is small, by the side of a shelving rock, and we can only load one canoe at a time; each, when ready, proceeding on its way.

But what pattering is that we have heard on the hill-side all morning, as if some animal were taking a single heavy step at a time and then coming to a full stop? Gun in hand we go up the bank to have a look and try to find out what it is. We pause beneath a tall green pine and listen. Suddenly the noise is repeated close behind us. Wheeling round to look it is again repeated, a little to one side this time. Next we feel a smart slap on one shoulder, when, looking up, one of the green cones which grow near the top of the pine just misses our face. We step a few paces to one side for a better view and look up. The mystery is at once explained. High up in the very top, where the cones are most numerous, a tiny squirrel is seen running from limb to limb, and with his sharp teeth nipping off cone after cone; and if we choose to

remain long enough, we will see the little gentleman run head-first down the tree, seize one of the newly-plucked cones, seat himself on a log, and, holding it between his fore-paws, tear off the green husks with his teeth, and make his breakfast of the soft white pith within.

Having satisfied our curiosity, and solved the problem of the peculiar noise, we retrace our steps to the landing, and in a few minutes are again under way. The stream is now a series of short stretches of smooth, deep water, alternating with shallow rapids, varying from a foot to three or four inches in depth; and it is a continual repetition of getting out and in, of paddling or pushing with the paddle along the deeper parts, and leading the canoe up the shallows. The bottom of the stream is composed of reddish-brown gravel. After a mile and a half of this, in which most of the forenoon is consumed, as we have frequently to take out part of the load, we enter a little bay. At the head of it a couple of pine trunks extend almost completely across the river, leaving a channel of only a few feet at the north shore. On reaching this point we have again to resort to wading for a few yards. During the last quarter of an hour we have been hearing the gradually-increasing noise of a chute; and on rounding the end of the pine trunks, and passing under an overhanging birch, the fall bursts upon our view as it rushes down a narrow, rock-bound gorge. We step into the canoe, and paddle across the little deep bay to a flat rock almost even with the surface of the water, at the end of a well-worn portage on the south side of the river, and step on shore. Above us, at a distance of three chains, lies the foot of Tea Lake.

This is the last portage we shall meet until we are a mile and a half above Canoe Lake. As it is our intention to go only as far as an old camp-ground about half way up that

lake to-night, and there spend to-morrow, which is the Sabbath, we conclude to have dinner at the head of this portage. We take advantage of the pause to dry our wet garments.

Here the river rushes through a narrow gorge in the dark granite rocks, and has a fall of about nine feet in a distance of three chains. It is so rough and full of stones that no canoe or punt could run it, even when at the highest. At the proper season of the year this is one of the best spots on the whole river for trout fishing. Not only the small brook trout, but also the large speckled trout of the lakes, may be taken in unlimited numbers.

The midday meal is quickly despatched, the usual smoke indulged in, dry clothing donned, and the canoes are re-loaded. There is only a short narrow neck of the lake visible from the landing. And the first few rods above the falls are so completely filled with stones that there is no small amount of difficulty in guiding the canoes safely through. In a few minutes, however, we are clear of obstructions and into deep water, and soon enter another and larger bay.

Straight ahead a small piece of second-growth timber marks the spot where at some former time there has been a hunters' camp. We round a point of rock on the south shore, and the small but lovely sheet of water lies before us. Right in our path, and at the distance of three-fourths of a mile, a small pine-clad island rears its head high out of the water. We can see all the south shore, which is comparatively straight, right to the head; and as we proceed the north shore gradually opens to the view, extending away to the north-east in a series of points and small bays. Away to the north-east is a long narrow streak of red felspathic sand. The land nearly all round rises abruptly from the water's

edge to moderately-sized hills. A fringe of low, dark green cedar and balsam overhangs the water all round the shore; while a dense forest of hardwood and hemlock, and an occasional cluster of white pines, rearing their heads high above all others, is all around. As we get fairly into the open lake, our light vessel begins to feel a fresh northerly breeze, and dances merrily over the tiny wavelets.

There to the right a number of trees have been cut down; their brown tops are lying in the water. As we pass them a narrow open lane is seen extending away up the hill to the south. Glancing northwards, a similar line is seen in that direction also. It is one of the many surveyor's lines which mark the limits of the farm lots into which the land has been divided; for this whole section has been laid out into one hundred acre lots, and lines have been cut straight through the woods, at right angles to each other, and at a distance of one hundred chains apart.

We glide merrily past the south side of the island, and discover another and smaller one immediately to the east of it. On our right a small spot of coarse grass and reeds marks the mouth of a small creek, the outlet of a small lakelet half a mile to the south lying in a little hollow amongst the dark green woods.

On the smallest island are the traces of an old camp-ground, and a rude frame of poles raised a few feet above the surface of the ground denotes where fishing parties have dried the fish they had caught at the outlet, in order to prepare them for being taken home—a treat for their city friends.

In a few minutes we are out from the lee of the islands, and have to cross a neck of rough water; but it is soon passed. We are now skirting the shore of a lovely hardwood

point. Away half a mile to the east a large brook is rolling out from amongst the trees. It is the outlet of Smoke Lake, which lies a mile and a half to the east.

We advance round the point to the left, and are soon at the mouth of a narrow bay, extending a quarter of a mile northwards. At its head a solitary pine, standing on a slight elevation in a lily-fringed marsh, points out the mouth of the river. The ridge of hardwood extends all along its west shore, while on its east side is a forest of tall pines. The water is shallow and clear, and we pass over several shoals of trout lying near the bottom.

The river is still a couple of chains wide, with a bright sandy bottom, but very shallow. A short half-mile of river, and we enter a pond stretching like a huge bag for nearly half a mile to the east. We steer along the north side, round a grass-covered sandy point, and again enter the stream, which extends away in a north-easterly direction along the base of a high rocky hill on the east side. A few rods from the mouth is a bar of stones which almost completely fills up the channel; but steering close by the east side of a big boulder we find a narrow passage sufficiently deep for our little vessels. Now a big creek, the outlet of some beaver pond, away amongst the western hills, is gliding in through a bed of tall ferns. The river now becomes much deeper, and has a black muddy bottom. The west shore is for the most part low and swampy; while on the east are high, pine-topped bluffs.

There, a little dark-brown animal is running along the shore. It is about the length of an ordinary-sized cat, but shorter-legged, and has a somewhat smaller body and a black bushy tail. It has not observed us before plunging into the water, bound, evidently, for the opposite shore, and we can

see nothing but the round bullet head and a pair of sharp eyes. It is a mink; but we refrain from taking a shot, as the fur is almost worthless at this season of the year. Suddenly the quick, piercing eyes catch sight of us, down goes the little head, and he is off in another direction.

Away at some distance ahead a reddish-brown animal, as large as a good-sized dog, is seen walking out on a fallen tree which rests on the surface of the water. The canoe is stopped, and the animal looked at through the field-glass. It proves to be a large wolf. He has already caught sight of us as unfamiliar objects, but he is safe, as he is too far off even for a rifle-shot, especially when fired out of a canoe. After surveying us for a few minutes, he walks leisurely back to the shore, and skulks away into the woods.

Our attention is now attracted to an object on shore, a few feet from the water's edge. A number of short pickets are driven into the ground close to each other, and leading out about a foot from the root of a tree. At a distance of six inches from this is another similar row parallel with it. These pickets are about one foot in height; on top are laid a few small balsam limbs. This is what is termed a mink house. A small steel trap is set at the door, with a few leaves laid carelessly over it, so as to conceal it from the intended victim. A fish, a piece of muskrat, or leg of partridge, is fastened at the back end of the house, and as the little animal reaches in for the bait one of his legs is sure to be caught in the iron clasp.

Half a mile up, the stream shoals to about a foot in average depth, with a bright sandy bottom. Pulling round to the left of a small island, and over the top of a bed of tall reeds, we see a large opening, when, on rounding a couple of bends, Canoe Lake, in all its picturesque beauty, is before us, extending away a little east of north. Right ahead, and at the dis-

tance of a mile, is a large rock-bound island, covered with graceful red pine. Only that portion of the west shore south of the island is visible from this point. Away to the east the land is high and mountainous, topped with a dense forest of pine. The brisk northern breeze has raised a heavy swell, and long white-capped waves are chasing each other into the mouth of the river. We are soon into it, and our canoes dance merrily over the swells.

Our way is straight up the lake to the west of the island. The sea is very rough, but we think we can weather it. We edge as closely as possible to the west shore, in order to be in shallow water in case of accident. But scarcely are we well out of the river, passing close by a low, moss-covered, rocky point on our right, when a loon suddenly plunges screaming into the water, and, propelled both by foot and wing, dashes out into the open lake. She must have a nest near here. The loon, having no joint in the leg, cannot walk, and is never found on shore far from water. We run in behind a sheltering ledge of rock, and step on shore. There on the bare ground, a few feet from the water, is a little black ball of down, scarcely bigger than a lady's clenched hand. A small black bill and pair of sharp eyes are visible on the upper side of it. The little fellow is evidently only a few hours out of the broken shell, which is lying to one side. He has not yet taken his first bath, because he is probably waiting for his mate, whose chirpings are heard issuing from another egg hard by.

Loons are very numerous in all those northern waters. They arrive as soon as the ice is out in the spring, returning south again in the month of October. As they cannot walk, they are never met with on land, but manage, by the aid of their wings, to flop a few feet on the shore, and lay their one

or two eggs on the bare ground. As soon as the young are hatched they take to the water, and the tiny black dots are to be seen following the old one around or seated on her back. She feeds them with newly-caught fish.

Our progress up the lake is exceedingly slow, for if we put on too much speed we will, in all probability, be swamped. A long, narrow bay extends away to the south. There is an old camp-ground on the south end of the island, but as it is too much exposed to the wind, we prefer a little bay behind a protecting ledge of rock, where others have camped before. It is a quiet nook where we will be perfectly protected from the wind. Here it is our intention to remain for a few days. The last bag of hard tack is getting low. Not, we confess, to our regret, for all are getting tired of it, and are longing for other bread. After supper the cook begins making preparations for baking.

He overhauls his stores for the package of pressed hops, but it is nowhere to be found. It has been forgotten. Well, it really does not much matter. He can easily find a substitute. A handful of moss is gathered from a neighbouring maple, and boiled as hops would be. The big tin dish is half-filled with flour, and into this the boiling liquid is strained; a yeast cake or two reduced to powder, and to it a handful of salt is added. This, with a portion of the flour, is mixed to the necessary consistency, when a couple of small sticks are laid across the top, and a clean towel spread over all. It is now set on one side till next morning.

But as Canoe Lake, like all the others in this region, is famous both for the size and flavour of its trout, preparations are made to secure some. They are not to be had at this season of the year, either by angling from the shore or trawling, as the fish are deep down in the cold water beneath,

and recourse must be had to the night line. One or two minnow hooks are soon obtained from some mysterious quarter, and baited with a crumb of bread or a tiny piece of pork, when fishing for bait begins. As soon as caught it is placed in a pail of water for the purpose of being kept alive. It would be labour thrown away to bait the hooks with lifeless material. The long trawling line we have brought is unwound, and hooks with two or three feet of line attached to it at intervals of five or six feet. A favourable locality with twenty-five or thirty feet of water is selected. A half-dozen pieces of dry cedar are made into floats; another line, tied to a stone, is made fast to each end of the trawling line, and also one of the floats with a sufficient length of line to keep the main one at least ten feet below the surface. All is now taken out in a canoe, and the end let down into the water. While one paddles slowly in the direction in which we wish the line to lie, another baits the hooks and pays out the line; at equal distances of about twenty feet the floats are attached till the whole is submerged.

The yeast is working splendidly, the cook informs us as we emerge from the camp next morning, and he promises us a fresh loaf for dinner; while so saying he uncovered the dish, displaying the white frothy mass ready to overflow. With bared arms, he is quickly at work kneading it into dough; it is then carefully smoothed over and lightly dusted with dry flour and the cover replaced. Our morning toilet is soon made, and in all the glory of clean guernsey or cotton shirt and socks, we sit down to breakfast. But what about the night line? Has any one been out to see? No, we will overhaul it after breakfast, and probably have fresh trout, as well as fresh bread, for dinner. One never thinks of any other fish than trout here. True, there are a few ling and

lots of suckers; but if by any chance one is got on the line, it is contemptuously tossed back into the water. It is a lovely morning; there is not a breath of air stirring. The surface of the lake is as smooth as a sheet of glass, and the sun looms, with veiled face, through a thin fleecy cloud, which overhangs yonder pine-clad mountain. Perfect silence reigns, broken at short intervals only by the ho-o-o of a couple of loons sailing leisurely, gazing on the uncommon sight of our tent, and the smoke of our fire in this unbroken wilderness.

The floats on the night line are plainly in sight of the landing. One of them is twirling and shaking, and is slowly drawn down; in a couple of minutes the end again bobs up, topples over, and resumes its former position, to disappear again a moment afterwards. "There are fish on the line," is whispered, and instantly a canoe is launched and speeding off to the spot. The loons see it and down they go; we watch the spot, to see them rise again to the surface, for full five minutes, and we then hear a distant "ho-o-o." There they are, fully fifty rods away down the lake from where they disappeared. By this time the canoe has reached the line; but as it is moving across our range of vision and is also between us and the line, we can only conjecture that the men are unhooking the fish. In the course of a few minutes the prow is turned towards us, and the landing is quickly reached. What beauties! A dozen at least! Look at the great big fellow with black back and gray sides! We have no means of weighing him, but he is two and one-half feet long at least, and of that peculiar kind of corpulency supposed to be characteristic of aldermen. There is another only a few inches shorter, but tapering in shape, and so beautifully spotted that it is only by the shape of his tail we know him to be a salmon and not a speckled trout; and here, also, is one of the genuine

speckled trout of the lakes, fully a foot long, and nearly half as much in depth. They are handed out to those on shore. The pail of minnows is taken on board, and the men push off again to the line to rebait the hooks. The fish are soon decapitated, and split down the back, cleaned, and washed in the pure lake water. What rich-looking flesh! it is as red as any salt-water salmon!

The cook divides the fish into convenient-sized pieces for cooking, lightly sprinkles them over with salt, piles them on tin plates, and sets them away in a shaded corner ready for dinner. By the time this is done his dough is ready for its next stage in its progress towards bread. A clean towel is spread out over a large piece of bark, laid on the ground for a bakeboard. A portion of the dough is cut off, firmly kneaded, and placed in the well-greased bake-kettle; three more pieces of like size completely cover the bottom, and fill it half way to the top. The pothole is scraped out, and a shovelful of hot sand and coals thrown in. The bake-kettle is carefully placed in position; a thin coating of cold ashes laid on top, and the whole completely covered with hot sand and coals, so as to effectually prevent any escape of steam. A note is now taken of the time of day, and an hour afterwards the kettle is taken out and the lid removed. There is the rich brown top; it is full to the brim, and the lid slightly lifted. A knife or sliver of wood is passed down through the centre; on being withdrawn it is found to be as clean as when put in. The big loaf is then turned out. "It is as light as a feather," remarks the cook, as he sets it on edge in the shade of an old stump to cool, and in the course of a few minutes another is undergoing the same process.

A few of the boys have washing to do, and this is the next thing attended to. Then quietness reigns in camp till noon.

By this time the second loaf is cooling by the side of the first, and the grease produced by last night's and this morning's pork frying emptied into the bake-kettle, and set on top of the fire; as soon as it has arrived at the boiling point, the big lumps of fish are rolled in flour and laid in the bubbling mass. In half an hour we are enjoying dinner—and what a dinner! Fresh bread and newly-caught trout. The bread light and spongy, such as no cooking stove or bake-oven could ever produce, and it will keep for days without becoming either dry or hard; whilst more nutritious or richer-flavoured fish than our lake trout do not swim in any water, either fresh or salt.

CHAPTER XII.

ABOUT TRAPPERS AND BEAVERS.

N camp on the Lord's Day we do not hear "the sound of the church-going bell." There are sundry little jobs of work done that would never be thought of at home. The usual quiet of the day, however, is not altogether forgotten. Here and there solitary ones may be seen seated perusing their pocket-bibles, and the holy strains of "Hide me, O, my Saviour hide," and "From Greenland's icy mountains," or that grandest of all sacred songs—

> Know that the Lord is God indeed;
> Without our aid He did us make:
> We are His flock, He doth us feed,
> And for His sheep He doth us take,

are wafted at intervals and in snatches across the quiet waters of the lake.

A ramble in the still, green woods, and a sail into the rock-bound and sand-fringed bay away to the north-east, are indulged in, and a little before sunset we sup of the same luscious fare on which we dined. By the time darkness has fairly set in all are in bed, refreshed and invigorated by the day's rest.

At intervals during the night the silence is broken by a long single cry, or rather howl, from the loons. At daybreak we are awakened by the howling of a pack of wolves, up on the hills a short distance behind the camp. A few short, quick yelps are succeeded by a long dismal howl. Breakfast is soon despatched, the night line, with a dozen or so more fish, taken in, and ere the rising sun has dispelled the light, fleecy mist we are again speeding northwards across the smooth, unruffled waters of the lake.

In a few minutes we are crossing the mouth of a little bay, into which a small creek empties its cool waters. There goes a round, brown head, with a small streak of dark-brown fur behind it. We pause, gun in hand, ready for a shot, should it come within reach. But in a moment we are discovered; up goes a black, trowel-shaped object a few inches behind the streak of fur, and descends with a loud whack on the water. This act is of itself sufficient proof that the animal is a beaver taking his morning's swim. The little animal never dives when alarmed without striking the water a smart stroke with its tail, making a noise that may be heard for at least a quarter of a mile.

Straight ahead, at the east end of a belt of sand, we see a large clump of tall, dark-green alders. Towards this object we steer, for we know it marks the mouth of the river. In half an hour we are out of the lake. Here the Muskoka is no longer what might be strictly termed a river, but a mere creek, scarcely two rods wide, winding slowly, by a tortuous course, through a narrow alder and spruce swamp.

Half a mile above the lake another and almost equally large creek comes in from the west, which might easily be mistaken for the main stream. We ply our paddles up the one to the right, which rapidly becomes shallow, as well

as narrow, and the numerous tree-tops which obstruct the channel render our progress exceedingly slow. At last, after a mile or so, another portage is reached. To the right the water comes tumbling over a perpendicular fall of eight feet, and for the next half-mile is one continuous rapid filled with fallen timber, till Big Joe Lake is reached. This is another favourite spot for trout-fishing during high water.

The well-cleared and level portage is soon crossed, and we come to the foot of a long, narrow bay stretching to the north. Immediately on the right hand is the outlet. The view towards the north is cut off by a high, pine-clad hill. In a few minutes we are all afloat, and picking our way through a mass of floodwood which has accumulated round the outlet. The bay is hemmed in between high, pine-topped hills. On reaching its northern end the elevation which obstructed our view is found to be an island, the larger part of the lake stretching away round it to the east. Our course lies along its west side. Straight ahead a narrow opening is seen between the mountains, and a larger opening beyond. Just after passing the north end of the island we can see a narrow opening extending westerly up the side of the mountain. This line is the north boundary of Peck, and we are now in the township of Hunter. A few strokes more and we are in a short, deep, narrow channel, and another lovely lake is before us, stretching away a mile and a quarter to the north. At its upper end a long, narrow neck of water is almost concealed by a small, mossy island. Should we follow this direction we would find a brook tumbling out of a little beaver pond over a ledge of rock. We cross this, and go for a quarter of a mile up a muddy, sluggish creek, tenanted by countless numbers of bull-frogs, the croakings of which are almost deafening in the early months of spring,

and even now the cry of individual members is frequently heard, and we enter Doe Lake. It is another beautiful sheet of water, and lies spread out around numerous low, rocky, pine-clad points, or extends into picturesque bays.

Should we wish to visit Bear Lake, we turn to the left up another wide, marshy creek, the water almost completely concealed beneath a covering of water-lilies, for half a mile further; or, if we proceed up the south-east bay, we will find a hunter's trail, pursuing which for ten minutes by the side of a brawling creek, tossing and tumbling over its bed of gravel, we arrive at the foot of the short and narrow Hawk Lake.

Each one of those numerous lakelets has been named, and every nook and corner in them explored and examined by the fur-trapper, for each contains its quota of beaver, mink, otter, or muskrat, and their names have probably been suggested by the first animal or bird seen on their shores. Each, as we enter it, seems more lovely than the last, displaying some new beauty of pine-covered bluff or rock-bound bay. As it is not our intention, however, to visit them at present, we steer for the west shore, where a few charred and blackened balsams and cedars are seen.

We now reach another portage, and all are soon landed. We shall leave a portion of our party here for a day or two, while with the others we explore the country to the north. After dinner the packs are quickly made up with the necessary supplies for our short absence.

There is a special reason why we should not forget this spot. A few years ago, when engaged in a survey in this neighbourhood, we had our store camp at this point. It was found out by an enterprising bear. Several hundredweight of pork was carried off before his depredations were discovered, entailing on the whole party short rations.

Tossing packs and canoes on our shoulders, we wend our way into the woods. Here there is a portage of a mile and a half to be crossed, and the heavy packs are more than once thrown on the ground, while big drops of perspiration are wiped from flushed faces. After descending a mountain side we come to a large creek meandering through a bed of big stones. This is the same stream which we passed in the morning a little above Canoe Lake. It is crossed by stepping from stone to stone. Threading our way for a few rods up its west bank we arrive at the foot of Potter's Lake. Only a narrow neck of water is visible from where we are standing; but as we glide over the surface, ruffled slightly by a light northern breeze, its beautiful bays and points are one after another approached and passed. We lay our course for its most north-westerly bay. Past a solitary rock, rising like a lone sentinel out of the water, several small islets are also passed, and a few beaver-houses are seen on the shores. The canoe is drawn out beneath the spreading boughs of an overhanging cedar, a few rods to the south of where another good-sized creek empties in its waters.

Again we shoulder our traps for a distance of thirty chains, by the side of a creek flowing down a rocky gorge. It is perceptibly smaller than the stream below Potter's Lake, for we are nearing its head waters. This brings us to the foot of Burnt Lake, another small gem scarcely a mile in length. We cross to its northern end. A small rivulet of a couple of yards in width is meandering through an opening in a ledge of rock. Stepping on shore and shouldering the packs, in less than five minutes we are at another small sheet of water extending a quarter of a mile to the east. Across its outlet, and completely stopping up the creek, is stretched an embankment of earth, stones, limbs of trees, and short junks of wood. It seems a

mass of matter thrown accidentally together, forming a narrow ridge on top, over which the water is trickling. On the lower side it is perpendicular, with the ends of limbs and timber sticking confusedly out, while on the upper side it presents a smooth surface of gravel and black mud extending, by a gentle slope, away into the bottom of the pond. This is a beaver dam, and has been built by the little animals in order to raise the water of the small lake a sufficient height to preserve its winter's supply of food beneath the surface.

The beaver does not always select a lake for its home, but more frequently a small creek flowing through a swamp is pitched upon, and a dam from four to six, and sometimes as much as eight, feet high is built across its lower end to the high land on either side. Then the beaver house, shaped like a large cock of hay, is constructed some distance above the dam. By instinct the creatures seem to know how high the water will reach, and the house is made high enough to be four or five feet above the surface of the water. The entrance is near the bottom, while near the top and just above the highest water level a dry, warm chamber is left; in this undisturbed home they pass the long winter and bring forth their young. Gradually the water rises till the top of the dam is reached, when the surplus overflows in tiny little drippings. A large quantity of their favourite food is collected and deposited by the beavers in a pile by the side of the house for the winter's supply. The trapper is careful not to cut away the dam—if he does the family will at once decamp for "fresh fields and pastures new"; but a small cut is made in the top of the dam. By the side of this the trap is set a few inches underneath the surface of the water; it is made fast by a chain, a few feet in length, to a stout picket driven into the bottom a few feet further out in the water,—more frequently

to what is termed a tally-pole,—that is, a thick pole of light, dry wood and six or eight feet long with the trap-chain made fast to the centre of it: this is left floating.

The trapper is careful to leave as few traces of his presence as possible, and if the whole can be done without his getting out of his canoe at all so much the better, for the sense of smell in the beaver is very acute. The quick instinct of the animal very soon detects the slightest variations in the height of the water, and during the night an examination is made in order to find out the cause. As soon as the cut is discovered they at once set to work to repair the damage. Ere long a foot of one of them is in the iron grasp of the trap; he then dashes off for his only harbour of refuge, the deep water, and is speedily drowned. If the trap has been made fast to a picket stuck in the bottom, the game is bagged as soon as the pond is visited; but if it has been fastened to a tally-pole, it may be found in any part of the pond, for the beaver will live for a considerable time under water, and will swim around until dead, dragging the pole along with him. This is usually made heavy enough, however, to float both beaver and trap, and is easily discovered. Not only is the beaver valuable for his fur, but his flesh is held in high esteem, the tail especially being a rare delicacy.

The area of the ponds which have thus been formed vary in size from an acre or so in extent to several hundred acres, and the timber, being constantly under water, dies in a few years, falls down, and in course of time is completely decayed. What was once a thick swamp is now an open lake, with here and there the white naked trunk of an extra large tamarack or cedar standing. But hunters arrive on the scene. If they are Indians, and there is no danger of the white man coming in to dispute the hunting-ground, only a few of the

beavers will be taken each year. The dam is left intact, so as not to frighten the rest of the family or families : since they breed rapidly, a large increase may be depended upon each succeeding year.

If the trappers are white men a very different course is pursued, and the animals, if possible, are completely cleaned out. A large gap has been cut in the dam so that the game may be the more easily captured ; or, if this has not been done, the embankment will, in the course of a few years, get out of repair, causing leaks, when the pond will gradually become dry. A few years more it will be found completely covered with a luxuriant growth of tall grass, and become what is called a " beaver meadow." The grass is known as blue joint, and is cut in large quantities in the autumn months by the lumbermen, who put it up in stacks for horse and ox feed in the shanties during winter. If properly cured in season, and lightly sprinkled with salt when being stacked, it is considered little inferior to the best timothy hay.

This whole section of country is hunted over by an army of trappers during the months of October and November, and again in March and April. The hunt is made singly and in couples. Each has his own trapping ground, and by a code of laws peculiar to themselves no one ever trespasses upon the limits of his neighbour. Before commencing their operations an examination of the section selected has been carefully made, and all the various signs of the different kinds of fur-bearing animals noted.

A rude camp is constructed on the shore of some lake or river, near the centre of the limits. The space is then gone over, and the various kinds of traps set for the amphibious animals ; while a line of dead falls is also constructed through the woods, in various directions, away from the waters,

for fisher and marten, and perhaps an additional one or two for bears.

The trapper calculates on visiting his traps at least once a week, to secure the game and reset the trap or dead fall. In some sections he can do this and return to camp each night; while in others the extent of territory is too large, or the lakes and streams are so located, that he cannot get over the ground so expeditiously, and in this case he has a number of camps located at convenient distances, in each of which he spends a night alternately, collecting all the fur as he proceeds, which he brings to the central or store camp.

The fur-bearing animals are all the trapper attempts to take. Only a sufficient number of deer are killed to supply the camp with venison; and probably a few moose for the sake of their skins and massive antlers, the whole carcass of rich juicy meat being left to rot, or to feed the wolves. As soon as the ice begins to form in the fall, or before it breaks up in the spring, the hunters return to the settlement with their load of valuable furs.

But while discussing the habits of the beaver and his natural, and we might say his only, enemy, the sun has been gradually but steadily declining in the west, and we are yet a considerable distance from where we propose to camp for the night. In a brief space of time we are across the little pond, and speeding over a narrow portage to the north-east. In half an hour we find ourselves on the shore of another lakelet, with its small outlet immediately to the right of the end of the portage. Here again we embark. No one ever thinks of walking round any of those sheets of water, no matter how small they may be, and we carry the canoes and make them carry us alternately. At the end of half a mile

we arrive on the shore of McIntosh Lake. It is a lovely sheet of water, studded with naked rock and small rocky, pine-clad islets. Immense pines overhang the water and crown the rocks on its eastern shore ; while its western hills are clothed in a dense growth of black birch and maple, with a fringe of cedar, hemlock, and alder round the shore. Here there is no stream emptying to the south or west ; but a large creek is seen winding in through a large tamarack swamp from the south. In the north-east a valley of alders is seen extending in an easterly direction between the mountains, with a quantity of white driftwood piled up against the shore denoting the outlet.

The ridge we have just crossed between this and the last lakelet is the Height of Land, and for the present we are done with the Muskoka ; the waters we are now gazing upon find their way to the ocean through the valley of the Ottawa.

We paddle straight into the head of a deep bay almost due north from the end of the trail, and pitch our camp for the night.

CHAPTER XIII.

INCIDENTS BY FLOOD AND FIELD.

THE mists engendered by the cool night are still hanging heavily on the waters when our camp is struck. A short half mile, through a lovely hardwood glade, brings us to "Wolf Lake," a sheet of pure limpid water. Proceeding for a mile or so across the mouths of the small narrow bays which indent its eastern shore, a V-shaped bay is before us, extending to the north-east; arriving at its foot we enter the outlet, a creek with just water enough to float the canoes. We proceed down its winding course, across a beaver meadow covered with a luxuriant growth of blue-joint grass, pass through a narrow opening in an old beaver-dam, and in another hour are in Misty Lake. It is seen extending away to the west, between high hardwood hills, and is dotted here and there with small islands. Away at the distance of a mile two objects are seen moving steadily towards the north shore. Are they loons, or what? The field-glass is brought to bear upon them. They are seen to be an old cow moose and her calf. The flesh of the calf would be a rare delicacy; but they are too far away for us to overtake them, and long ere we could come within shot they would be far into the deep, dark woods, where pursuit would be hopeless.

We wend our way towards the north-east, and rounding a point, pass through a short, shallow narrows a chain or so in width, when we find the water again expanding into a broad lake stretching away a mile and a half to the east. An open and recently cut line on the narrow neck of land on the south side of the narrows is the boundary between the townships of Hunter and Devine. Proceeding easterly to the foot of the lake, here is a narrow neck extending still further a little to the south of east, till finally the outlet is reached. There is a stream at least four times the size of the Muskoka above Canoe Lake. It is rushing away to the east over a bed of huge boulders. There is a well-cut portage on the south shore, where we land, and follow it a quarter of a mile, when it ends by the side of a smooth, deep, rapid stream. We have discovered another river. What is its name? Let us retrace our way to Joe Lake, and endeavour to find it again, at a point lower down, and by another route.

We must endeavour to rejoin the camp we left yesterday on Joe Lake this evening, or go supperless to bed. While seated by the shore of the newly-found river we had eaten our last crust, and lake and portage are each in succession passed as rapidly as possible. The sun is nearly set by the time we arrive at the head of Potter's Lake, and total darkness has set in before we step on shore at the outlet. It is only a mile and a half to camp; but a mile and a half over a rough and hilly portage, bending beneath a canoe or pack, on a dark night is rather more than we care to undertake. A big fire is soon blazing up, by the light of which a few small balsams are felled. The night is clear and calm, with no signs of rain, and the dense foliage of the trees will effectually keep off the heavy dew; so we shall dispense with the tent by which an extra half-hour's work in the darkness is avoided. As a sub-

stitute for supper, an extra pipe is smoked, after which each one spreads down a few balsam boughs as he chooses, and wrapping himself in his blanket, tired Nature claims her rights, and in a few minutes all are sound asleep.

The first rays of the morning sun have not begun to gild the tops of the tallest pines when all are awake and on their feet. Ten minutes later, and we are wending our way along the narrow portage. It does not take long for us to reach the camp, and with a loud cheer awaken our comrades from their morning nap.

While breakfast, of steaming beans and newly-caught trout, is being prepared, we indulge in a refreshing plunge in the crystal waters of the lake. A hearty breakfast is soon partaken of, and word passed round to strike camp and pack up.

In less than another hour everything is done up, the canoes loaded, and once more we are off. In a few minutes we are through the narrows, and speeding east between the north shore of Joe Lake and the island. A mile to the east a small spot of tall beaver grass marks the inlet. Just before reaching it we discover, through a grove of alders on our left, a small pond in a beaver meadow. Pausing to have a look at it, an antlered buck is seen feeding on the far shore. Our hunter is quickly set on land, and creeps stealthily to the thin grove of alders, which are now found to be growing on the top of an old beaver dam. It is a long shot, but the deer may step into the woods at any moment, and taking a hasty aim he fires. The antlered head is instantly raised high in air, the eyes turned towards us, and the small column of smoke discovered, denoting the presence of an enemy. He sharply wheels round, his white tail rises, and with a single bound he is out of sight. The bullet has passed over his

back, for Jack informs us that he overestimated the distance, and sighted the rifle too high.

We are now in a shallow, tortuous creek, with scarce water enough to float our light canoes. In less than ten minutes Little Joe Lake is reached. Half a mile straight ahead is a grass and alder covered marsh. To the left the shore is comparatively low, and timbered with pine and hemlock; while on the right rises a high mountain covered with hardwood. Soon the edge of the marsh is reached, through a bed of water-lilies, out of which half a dozen ducks have risen. They fly right round the lake, gradually attaining a higher elevation, then pass swiftly overhead speeding towards the west.

The Muskoka River is now found to be only a few feet wide, and the canoes must ascend it in Indian file. In a few minutes we are sailing along a narrow crooked lane between overhanging alders, and have frequently to duck the head to escape the interlaced limbs, and an occasional newly-fallen balsam has to be cut out of the way. In about an hour we arrive at a portage on the south side, and must land. About this the alders hang so thick and low over the water that it is impossible to force even a small canoe through them. We have now reached the head of canoe navigation on the Muskoka River. True, it is still a few miles to the fountain-head, but we shall make the distance by lakes, as the stream itself is no longer navigable.

Portaging along another quarter of a mile through a thick grove of tall pines we make the shore of a little pond. Hastily loading up, in five minutes we are across it. It is on the creek, for there is the outlet to the left where it rushes through a mass of boulders; while to the right a small cataract is tumbling over a ledge of rock into the pond, reminding us

that we are still on the main river. Climbing another rough portage of ten or twelve rods we reach another long narrow pond nestling between high pine-capped hills, and stretching away for half a mile to the north. Two-thirds of the way up a small fern-clad island lies nestled close to the east shore. When nearing the upper end of the pond the ear is once more greeted with the noise of falling water. Picking our way for a couple of chains amongst the stones in the little brook, there on our right are the first falls of the Muskoka, counting from what may be fairly termed its source. Another short rough portage of about the same length as the last, and a small sheet of water lies stretched before the eye extending apparently about half a mile eastward. We are now on the shore of Island Lake, and shall dine before re-embarking.

A ten minutes' pull suffices to bring us to the eastern end of the water visible from the landing, when, rounding a rock, we enter a narrow neck of water, and a few strokes of the paddle carry us through. There before us is Island Lake, stretching away to the north-east. On the north is a towering mountain, clothed to the summit with tall, graceful red pine. On the south is a magnificent ridge of high hardwood land. Away at a distance of a mile and a quarter to the east the view is cut off by a high and heavily-timbered rocky point jutting out from the south, and a cluster of small islands, while a deep bay extends away to the south-east. On our right an open lane in the woods extending south marks the east boundary of Hunter, and we are now in the township of McLaughlin.

We skim lightly across the deep blue waters, assisted by a light south-western breeze ; and in half an hour are passing through the cluster of small islands seen from the narrows. Here another bay extends about half a mile to the north ;

and here again we pass through a narrow neck of water. The main body of the lake lies before the eye stretching at least four miles to the north-east. To the south-east lies another deep bay, into which empty the waters of Linda's Lake, embosomed between high hardwood hills three miles to the south. Away in the far east is seen a high mountain, clothed in maple and birch, a few miles beyond which, we are told, lies the great Opeongo Lakes.

Numerous picturesque bays indent the shore on either side. While still a mile from the east end we turn to the left around a low, rocky point, and pass between the shore and a long narrow island. On our left another bay stretches nearly a mile and a half to the north. At its head is a swamp, through which a creek winds its way from a valley between the mountains in the background. Follow it up and you will find, at the distance of a mile or two, its origin in a small marsh or beaver meadow, and you will have reached the fountain-head—the source of the great Muskoka River. Away still further north is seen a mountain towering high above its fellows, clothed in hardwood timber, with a few green pines stretching sentinel-like over all.

Before us on the main shore, and south of this bay, are a few acres of land which have been burnt over, and are now clothed with a dense growth of small poplar and cherry. Towards the east end of this we lay our course. But before we can touch shore our little vessels ground on a bed of yellow sand. We carry the loads on shore, and then lift the canoes for the last time out of the waters which go to swell the volume of Lake Huron. When they are again launched it will be on a tributary of the Ottawa.

The sun is still high, and we conclude to cross the portage, and, if we can make no further progress, camp for the

night at the other end. We have scarcely gone half a mile up and down a few knolls, through the thick, green woods, in a north-easterly direction, when other water is seen glimmering through the trees. It looks like a pond extending only a short distance to the east. We cannot tell whether, on the whole, we have been ascending or descending from Island Lake, for we seem to have travelled as much down as up hill, and have also passed a few narrow necks of swamp, and the two waters have apparently about the same level. But this narrow elevation forms at this point the dividing ridge between the waters of Lake Huron and the Ottawa River.

Scattered round at the north end of the portage are a few leg-bones, ribs, and vertebræ of a moose. By the time everything has been got across our usual hour for camping has arrived, and all hands immediately set to work in getting up tents, and doing all the other odd jobs of camping-time.

Another lovely morning. As usual, we are up with the lark, and soon speeding across the pure, limpid water. Emerging from the small, pond-like bay, we enter a broad sheet of water extending nearly a mile to the east. Nearing the bottom, it is seen spreading away towards the north. We steer round a point, and keep along its west shore, heading towards a naked rock at the north. When about half way across, a large island is passed on our right hand, the main body of the lake extending to the east behind it. This sheet of water is Little Otter Slide Lake. In a few minutes the outlet is reached. The trunks of two or three large pines have fallen across the stream. Stooping under one, lifting over another, and cutting the end off a third, we are finally in a broad, shallow, muddy creek, with a scarcely perceptible current. To the right is a high mountain, thickly timbered with large pines and hemlocks right down to the water's edge. On the

left is a large spruce swamp, backed by a high hardwood hill in the distance. The stream is so shallow that soft, black, slimy mud is turned up with every stroke of the paddle, and in several spots the canoes can only with difficulty be forced through it. We dare not step out, for if we did we would be engulfed in the soft, black, spongy mass.

In half an hour another large lake is entered. We are almost at the west shore, and it extends in a broad sheet away to the east. Straight ahead, at a distance of a mile, a pile of driftwood marks the outlet. The south shore is a high hardwood bluff, while pine and hemlock-capped mountains encircle the north side. The greater part of the lake lies completely hidden behind a large island and a cluster of smaller ones, and unless we go east beyond those we shall only have the pleasure of gazing upon a very small portion of Otter Slide Lake.

The landing is immediately to the west of the head of the creek, and is soon reached. The same old process of taking out, packing-up, crossing, and loading-up again, that we have become so well accustomed to, is repeated.

The portage this time is almost perfectly level, well cut out, and scarcely a five minutes' walk, when we are again afloat in a tiny little pond, guiding the canoes past stones and around sunken timbers. Another somewhat longer, and decidedly rougher, portage has to be overcome, and we emerge on the creek at the foot of a shallow, stony rapid.

The stream is not wide enough for two canoes to go abreast; and by this time the cravings of the inner man have again warned us that the dinner-hour ought to be near. The pail of hot tea is quickly prepared, and each with his chunk of bread and pork is busily engaged. An hour later finds us paddling slowly down the gently-flowing stream. It

is in many spots so shallow that there is scarcely water enough to float us; and as we pursue its windings we are steering towards nearly every point in the compass. It runs through a wide marsh dotted with clusters of alders, balsam, and spruce, nearly the whole surface being covered with tall beaver-grass. At short intervals we pass over deep pools, and, peering into the water, a fine trout is seen darting from underneath a projecting alder.

Suddenly the echoes are awakened by the report of a gun. What have the lads got this time? We round a sharp bend. There is the canoe lying with its end drawn up on a muddy bank, but there are no men to be seen. We pause and look round, when suddenly, a few rods off, they rise to their feet by the side of a clump of alders, and advance, dragging with them a fine fat yearling buck. Its head is adorned with a small, neat pair of velvet-covered horns. A single drop of blood behind the shoulder marks the spot where he received his death-wound. Mutual congratulations are exchanged; and we shall now, in addition to fresh trout, enjoy the luxury of fresh venison. The game is laid on its back, ripped open, and the entrails removed; the head is also cut off, for we carry no useless weight, and left alongside the other refuse as food for the ravens, which are croaking overhead and perched on the limbs of a neighbouring tree. There is a slight shifting of cargoes to make room for the venison, and again we are under way. We now enter another small pond, or expansion of the creek, a couple of chains wide by twice as many in length. At its foot is an old and dilapidated beaver-dam, and a low murmuring of water below announces the presence of another rapid. To the left is seen the end of the portage; and one canoe, suddenly fired with the ambition to reach the landing first, dashes off ahead of the others, but

scarcely has it got fairly under headway when it strikes against the sharp top of a sunken stone; a big hole cut clean through the bark is the consequence, and the water rushes in. Ere they can make the landing and disembark, the bottoms of the packs are submerged. As they are being lifted out a tiny stream of water pours from each, and half the contents are thoroughly soaked. This is the first serious damage any of our little fleet has sustained. The canoe is turned up for examination. There it is, a large, ragged hole, with the torn bark doubled in against the ribs. It is carefully smoothed out again, and the torn edges brought together. A piece of strong gray cotton, perhaps twice as large as the rent, is got ready, and the gum melted to its thinnest capacity. The cotton is put in, and thoroughly saturated with, the melted gum, when it is taken and smoothly spread over the hole, the greatest care being observed that the edges are well smoothed down. In a few minutes it is dry and cold, and the canoe is as sound as ever.

Half-way across the portage we find the stump of a large pine that has been cut with an axe. The body of the tree has been taken away, but in the place where it lay a number of slabs and a large quantity of chips bear unmistakable evidence that it has been made into a stick of square timber. We are again in the track of the lumberman. The last we saw was on the portage between Lake of Bays and Hunter's Bridge. This is of itself sufficient evidence that we are on other than Muskoka waters, and the creek we are threading must be either a tributary of the Madawaska or Petewawa Rivers.

We are in a little while again afloat, and moving noiselessly down the narrow creek. The ease with which the canoe is propelled is a pleasant change from the steady,

strong stroke which had to be constantly maintained while ascending against the current.

But it has been gradually clouding up ever since nine o'clock, and now heavy drops begin to fall. They soon thicken into a steady rain, and the light rubber sheets, which have been kept ready for such an emergency, are quickly spread over the loads. In half an hour we reach a short, shallow spot, where the stream—though it can scarcely be called a rapid—is almost completely filled with big stones, and we will require to make a short portage. The rain has been steadily increasing—there is every indication of a wet evening, and we conclude that our best course is to camp for the night.

The canoes are quickly unloaded, drawn out, and inverted over their cargoes. All is hurry and despatch now. Not only will the goods get wet, but we will soon be drenched ourselves. In a few minutes the tent is up—the floor made as level as possible. The balsam brush is picked and laid in place, although it is dripping wet. No water ever penetrates the short, green spines; a single shake releases it of all that clings to it, and when spread down it is as thoroughly dry as if there had been no rain at all. A large fire is soon blazing near the door of the tent, and a tump-line stretched along the ridge-pole is soon loaded with wet clothes hung up to dry, and the rain gives us very little annoyance.

CHAPTER XIV.

WE CONTINUE OUR EXPLORATIONS.

E knew before starting that there were discomforts in camping which we would have to bear with, and that we need not expect to make our trip without being occasionally caught in a shower, and probably getting a thorough wetting, so the little inconvenience is borne without a grumble. We are to have fresh venison for supper, and in due time a part of the carcass is stripped of its hide. The heart and liver of the animal were preserved. The bake-kettle is nearly filled with rich juicy steaks, and a few slices of fat pork. What a supper we do make! By the time we have had enough of the luxurious morsels there is no room left for either apple-sauce or rice.

After supper two of the party take a canoe, and go down the brook a short distance to a deep pool to angle for trout; for, contrary to expectation, the rain has entirely ceased, and the sun is shining out at short intervals through rents in the parting clouds.

But they speedily return, literally chased from their fishing ground by myriads of sand-flies and mosquitoes, which, they say, no man could withstand. Every wet article is now

got out and spread before the blazing fire, and by the time the night has fairly set in all is once more thoroughly dry.

A bright starlight night, with countless hosts of fire-flies, succeeds the wet afternoon, but the sand-flies are so annoying that a smudge has to be kept going in the back of the tent till long past midnight.

A heavy veil of mist is enshrouding both marsh and stream, hanging also in thick masses in the dense woods of the swamp, as we emerge from the tent in the early morning. A mile or more of what may very properly be termed narrow navigation brings us to the head of the long portage. The stream is still more winding than we found it yesterday. At one point we are speeding over a deep, clear stretch; then, with heads stooped to avoid the overhanging alders, we are winding round a sharp bend; at several points logs are to be got round or cut out of the way; then again floating beneath an arch of boughs which completely veils the stream, till finally we bring up at the end of the portage on the left bank, and bending beneath our loads are off down the shore of the creek. In a few minutes the path crosses the stream to the opposite side, and we get over on a fallen tree. Some of the party could not walk the slippery log, and have to wade the stream. They get wet feet, but what of that? So long as the water is warm they do not care, for as soon as the portage is passed, the wet socks can be replaced by dry ones, and one rarely ever catches cold in camp.

This is the longest portage since we crossed the Height of Land; but after crossing the creek, it is along an old lumber road, and so the travelling is much easier, although it is some five-eighths of a mile long, and the packs are finally laid down by the side of still water in another little alder marsh.

Less than five minutes further in the canoe and we reach

still another landing. It is not merely the end of a narrow portage this time, for here is a small cleared space covered, not with wild grass, but by clover and timothy hay, and the trough-roof of an old lumber shanty is also to be seen. Stepping up the bank, there, a few rods off, is the big old building of rough, unhewn logs, notched into each other at the corners, roofed over with other split logs slightly hollowed out to carry off the rain and melted snow. A small frame of slabs rises up four feet from the centre of the roof: this is the chimney, the big caboose being directly beneath it. The entrance is through a small door three by four feet in the centre of one end; a few panes of glass half-way down one side serve for a window. The building is at least thirty by forty feet, and seven or eight in height. It must have been built a good many years ago, and the dilapidated condition of the adjacent stables bears testimony that it is a number of years since it was used. But as the interior of the shanty is now filled with provisions for both man and beast, it is the evident intention of the owners to re-occupy it next winter.

The construction of roads is so expensive in this unbroken wilderness that the owner of timber limits finds it cheaper and more convenient, before the ice in the lakes and streams breaks up in the spring, and the smooth winter roads have become impassable, to lay in a sufficient supply of provisions to last his gang of men, who usually are sent into the woods about the end of autumn, till the ice has again taken, and the snows of the early winter render the roads passable.

A few men are generally left in charge during the summer months to raise vegetables at some central point, which goes by the name of the farm or depot; and at short intervals they visit all the shanties, where provisions, sleighs, and such like, have been stored, to see that everything is safe, and that none

of them have been broken into and an attack made upon the provisions by bears, and also that no fires have been started in the woods. In this instance the door of the shanty is firmly barricaded and chained up, and the chimney is also covered with heavy timbers, to resist the attacks of Mr. Bruin. On going round to the side of the building a small excavation is seen where one of those gentlemen has attempted to dig his way in underneath the foundation, but has had to relinquish the task, and forego the pleasure of dining on salt pork.

The obstructions in the creek have been so numerous, and have occasioned so many delays, that we have only made a short distance this morning; and when everything is on shore by the side of the old shanty, it is time to prepare dinner. We hear the noise of a fall behind the building, and while the cook is preparing the tea and frying a venison steak a fishing-line and rod are fitted up, and we make our way down a narrow path to the side of the stream. Here, at the foot of a beautiful cascade, it is spanned by the remains of a rude bridge. A rough lumber road winds up the opposite bank. Immediately beneath the bridge is a deep pool, and here there ought to be some brook trout. The hook is quickly baited and thrown in. It is scarcely ten seconds out of sight when there is a succession of sharp, strong tugs, and a big white fish, at least a foot long, is the next moment floundering on the shore. We pick it up and examine it. It is entirely covered with large, white scales. This is no trout, but the chub of the Ottawa waters. A considerable quantity of chub are to be had in the Muskoka waters; but there they are always small, scarcely larger than a good-sized minnow. Here they are as large as the biggest speckled trout, and are to be found in almost unlimited numbers.

Before either the pork or venison is cooked, we are back

at the camp with a half-dozen large fish, which in a very few minutes are dressed and added to the pan. The bright noonday sun is intensely hot, and each, with a plate of steaming meat, large slice of bread, and dish of scalding-hot tea, seeks a shady nook in which to discuss his meal.

The stream below the shanty is still small, having nothing except a few small rivulets to swell its waters below Otter Slide Lake. Again we are tracing its winding course through an alder marsh. There are high, dark woods on either side, but straight down stream an open space is gradually increasing in size. In half an hour, passing through a narrow opening in a bed of rushes, we suddenly find ourselves in open water, and White Trout Lake, in all its varied beauty, is spread out before the eye; and our canoes rise and fall on the heavy ground swell.

A stiff western breeze is blowing, and has raised a heavy sea, which is too much for our light canoes, so we steer along the west shore, and find it all we can do to cross the mouths of a couple of small bays. As we slowly proceed the lake is gradually unfolded to view, stretching away to the north and east. Coasting along the shore, we pass the end of an open line leading westerly. This is the northern boundary of the township of McLaughlin, and we now enter the township of Bishop. In half an hour after entering the lake a rocky point is reached, where the shore trends sharply to the west; and here we must stop, for the canoes could not live for five minutes in the long white-capped rollers which are thundering by, chasing each other in rapid succession.

In a few minutes everything is disembarked and laid out on top of the bank. It is a lovely spot for a camp, and commands one of the best views on the whole lake. The field-glass is quickly adjusted, and brought to bear successively all

round. A deep bay, thickly indented with smaller ones, extends for upwards of a mile to the west. Right in front and to the north-west is a cluster of small pine-topped islands which obstructs the view in that direction. Looking beyond their east end a part of the west shore is seen, on which is a narrow strip of small poplar, an evidence of its having a few years ago been burnt over. This extends northerly to near the outlet, which is concealed by an island densely clothed with the same variety of young timber; while on the east side of the outlet, and extending away inland, is a high hardwood mountain with a margin of pine and other evergreens encircling the waters. Right north of us the hardwood mountain slopes down to the water's edge at a point a mile and a half distant, on which a recently erected lumber-shanty is standing. A deep, bottle-shaped bay stretches away to the north-east and rounds up to another hardwood hill a quarter of a mile south-east of the shanty. From this a bay extends far away eastward, its end concealed behind still another cape. The remainder of the lake bends again in a graceful curve away to the east, and finally winds up by a regular sweep to the mouth of the creek we have just descended. The whole shore is covered by a dense primeval forest of hardwood and evergreens, and the scenery during the latter part of October, when the now green foliage has assumed its autumn colouring, must be gorgeous beyond conception.

Heavy masses of dark clouds are drifting athwart the heavens, emitting at short intervals light squalls of rain, while away on the east shore the swell is breaking in clouds of spray at least twenty feet high on the boulder-strewn beach. The tents are soon set up, extra care being bestowed on the beds to have them level and soft, as we are likely to remain here for a few days, and a number of balsam tops dragged forward

and piled up to windward of the camp to break the force of the gale. Another dozen or so of the big white chub were caught while we were descending the last part of the creek, and the little sheltered bay in which we landed is laid under contribution for as many more, so there is a bake-kettleful of fried fish for supper. They have not the delicious, tender flavour of the trout, and there are sundry small bones distributed promiscuously through the flesh; but still they are good, wholesome food, and are most thoroughly enjoyed.

We are now at the close of another week, and are well pleased to have arrived at such a pleasant spot in which to spend the Sabbath. The instructions of the Fourth Commandment are not very strictly adhered to, and the day is spent in a manner somewhat similar to the last. There is more clothes-washing and, in addition, considerable more mending done, for this packing over rough portages is very trying on our dry goods as well as the feet wear.

Shortly after dinner the cook is observed to be engaged in some mysterious operations by the side of the bake-kettle. A little water has been put in the bottom, which is then covered with slices of fat pork; on the top of this a layer of little flat lumps of dough is placed, then another of square chunks of venison, then more pieces of dough and venison are placed side by side till the kettle is filled, and a thin crust of dough aid completely over all. He now sets it in the pot-hole and covers it over with hot sand and coals. Next a big roly-poly pudding of dried apples and raisins is sewed up in a clean cotton cloth and placed in the largest pail, which has been half-filled with water, and then hung over the fire. By six o'clock both the contents of the pail and bake-kettle are cooked, and we sit down to a supper fit for a king.

It is another glorious morning; the wind has entirely gone

down and the surface of the lake is as smooth as a mirror. The high winds of the two preceding days seem to have completely dispelled the damp and mist occasioned by the recent rain, and the atmosphere has now a peculiar clearness but rarely seen.

We purpose to-day exploring the west part of the lake into which, we have learned, the waters of Misty Lake empty. The camp is left in charge of the cook, and taking with us a light lunch an early start is made. We always prefer an early start in the morning, when the air is cool and fresh. We thread our way through amongst the group of islands to the north-west of the camp, and steer across the mouth of another bay, which is now for the first time discovered, extending away to the west. Past a few more little islets, right in front is a beautiful birch point, on the north of which we now discover another picturesque and birch-fringed bay. A high hardwood mountain is on the left: as we skirt its base up the bay it gradually closes in till at last it is merely a narrow neck of water scarcely a chain in width. A few strokes of the paddle suffice to speed us through the short narrows, and we enter what the trappers call Little White Trout Lake, stretching away to the west for upwards of two miles.

Numerous small birch and pine-fringed points indent the north shore, while on the south a bold, burnt bluff of at least three hundred feet high towers above the water; high up near the top a bald-headed eagle may be seen rising from her nest on a narrow projecting ledge. We paddle sharply for half an hour along its base, then the shore turns suddenly to the south-east. Right opposite the rocky point round which we are steering, and at a distance of three-eighths of a mile, is another low point clothed in dark green pines, maple, and hemlock.

To the south of it lies a lovely bay, on the south shore of which an old lumber shanty is visible in a patch of raspberry bushes.

We steer straight south round a narrow peninsula which extends out from the west. On rounding its low rocky point we catch sight of a high hardwood mountain—a mile to the south—towering above the surrounding hills. This is the mountain we saw to the north of Island Lake, which is only between three and four miles directly south of our present position.

The head of White Trout Lake is at last before us at a distance of three-fourths of a mile. An open marsh extends all across it, hemmed in on either side by high pine-clad hills. The view up the marsh is cut off by a thickly-wooded island, which lies right in the centre of the soft, spongy ground, round the base of which, in the fall of the year, large quantities of cranberries may be gathered. Steering along the north shore, we enter the river, a stream about six rods wide, winding slowly along. At the distance of about two miles another, two-thirds its size, enters from the south-west. This one is the outlet of McIntosh's Lake, which lies a little over three miles to the west. Bending to the right the main stream follows an arm, or offshoot of the marsh, for about a mile and a half further, when the end of the marsh is reached. From this point it consists of a series of smooth stretches and short chutes to the point we left a week ago below Misty Lake. It can be followed for several miles further above that lake, when it spreads out into a network of lakelets and small creeks, which form its source.

The drier parts of this marsh is a favourite haunt of the moose in the fall of the year, or during the fly season, and have at one time been well-timbered with cedar and tamarack,

now nearly all dead and strewn on the ground or standing bare white poles, their places being rapidly taken by large clusters of alders.

Before sunset we are back to camp discussing a hearty meal prepared of the same viands and in the same manner as yesterday's supper. To-day we have been tracing out the source of the Petewawa, one of the Ottawa's largest tributaries. We shall devote to-morrow to following its windings a few miles further towards the north of White Trout Lake. We have frequently during the day seen large trout leaping up out of the water, and now find that the cook has his night line set, and will probably have the pleasure of testing their merits, as compared with their namesakes of the Muskoka, for breakfast.

The sun is scarce an hour high when we are again merrily dancing over tiny wavelets, and heading for the north end of the lake. We shall not return to-night, so a tent, blankets, and a two days' supply of provisions are taken along. We have not been disappointed in our anticipations of trout for breakfast, and have found the quality quite up to our most sanguine expectations.

In an hour or so we enter a little cove just beyond the burnt island seen from the camp, and there a short distance right ahead is a newly-built timber-dam and slide—another evidence that the axe of the lumberman will be heard in those woods during the approaching winter. In five minutes more we are at the landing. It is but a few steps across to the foot of the portage, when we reach the head of a small pond. The fall is only a few feet, and the dam has evidently been constructed for the sole purpose of keeping back the waters of the spring freshet, in order to retain them for use in floating the timber over some of the more shallow rapids

further down the stream, as the summer advances and the waters begin to subside. A five minutes' paddle suffices to bring us to the foot of the pond, where there is another short chute with a few feet of fall, and where the narrow raceway is overhung, and the water almost completely sheltered, by tall pines and hemlocks. At its foot is a deep, dark pool—a rare spot for trout. We are now in another lake; away to the west, at a distance of half a mile, is seen a belt of rushes, behind which a hollow between the hills marks the channel of White Pine Creek, which empties its waters through the rushes. This stream is famous for its trout, and also as being a favourite haunt of the moose. A few strokes of the paddle, aided by the current from the falls, carry us out of the little cove and into a long narrow lake, stretching away almost due north, hemmed in at the lower end by a high mountain, clothed like the others with hardwood and pine. On the east side the hills rise only to a moderate elevation. They have already been depleted of most of their pine timber. On the west, the land attains a much higher elevation, and becomes mountainous. The chain of waters here forms the boundary of a timber berth, the forest being still untouched on the west shore. Arriving at the foot of this body of water, a narrow alder and balsam-covered valley is seen winding its course by the base of a mountain towards the north-west, through which another fine trout brook meanders to the main stream. Here the waters become reduced to the dimensions of a river, and taking a sharp turn to the east, flow for a few chains through a grassy marsh, when they once more spread out for a quarter of a mile or so into a shallow pond. There is another sharp bend almost at right angles; this time it is to the north, and we find ourselves in a deep, gently-flowing stream of eight or ten

rods in width. In a few minutes another short portage is reached; then a few short stretches of smooth, still water, where the stream spreads out a little, and a couple of short rapids down which we run the canoes, and enter Red Pine Lake.

At first sight it seems only another trifling expansion of the river, with a pine-clad bluff on our right front; but just before reaching this, a narrow neck of water leads into a beautiful rock-bound nook to the east, and the bluff turns out to be an island. Skirting along between the island and the west shore, a lovely little gem of an island, on which are a number of clusters of alders and a few graceful red pine, is sighted. Stepping up the bank, above the narrow strip of dark shingle, it is seen to be literally covered with huckleberry bushes. Many large clusters of the blue fruit are already ripe, and like a band of school-children we revel in their sweets.

The body of the lake is now seen extending away to the east. The north shore is overhung by groves of the timber from which it derives its name. Moss-covered rocks and pine-crested mountains overshadow the numerous picturesque bays on the south side. Here, as the sun is by this time nearing the meridian, we conclude to have dinner, and the pail of tea is soon steaming on the mossy turf.

CHAPTER XV.

MORE EXPLORATION AND A GOOD SHOT.

AFTER the usual noon-day rest we again embark, and pursue our course northward. Having passed several beautiful moss-covered isles and points, on emerging from a neck of deep water only a few chains in width we enter a large sheet of water stretching away far to the north and west. We head along the east shore, steering from point to point for some distance across the mouths of numerous small bays to where it bends in a graceful and regular curve towards the north-east. On nearing the north end, the side of a hill, which has been burnt over, is descried, and from this it has probably derived its name of Brûlé Lake. The shore still keeps trending to the eastward, the north side gradually closing in till the two almost unite, when the pent-up waters rush over a rocky bed on either side of a small island. We land at the head of the rapid, and, following a well-beaten portage for five minutes, reach the foot, and there lies the Petewawa River, flowing, in a majestic stream, to the eastward.

We have traced it almost from its source; seen it gathering together its scattered waters, gradually increasing in volume, until it has now assumed the form of a deep, swift

river, and from this point to continue on its way, collecting the scattered waters from the large valley it drains, till finally it empties into the Ottawa ten miles north-west from the town of Pembroke. We shall now leave it, and retrace our steps to Canoe Lake, and endeavour to find the source of another tributary of the Ottawa River, the Madawaska.

Here there are numerous traces of old camp-grounds, as the river drivers have been detained here for some time each succeeding spring guiding the timber and saw-logs down the rough rapid at the outlet of the lake.

As the sun is by this time low down in the west, we shall camp for the night, and explore the windings of the west shore on our way to the south again on the morrow. On steering westerly it is seen that while on our way north a large part of the lake was hidden from our view by a number of small islands scattered over its surface, many of which had been mistaken for the shore of the lake. The day is half spent in steering in and out of the numerous bays which indent the western shore, and admiring and speculating on the value of the dense forest of large and valuable white pine which encircles it and extends away to the west. The north boundary of the township of Bishop crosses this lake, and its northern part lies in the township of Osler. By the time we have retraced our way to the island on which we dined yesterday it is long past noon, but a remembrance of its mass of luscious berries induces us to return and dine again to-day. But just before reaching it a canoe is seen rapidly approaching from the east. A white puff of smoke rises from its bow, followed by the crack of a rifle. This is taken as a signal that they wish to speak to us, and, firing a shot in reply, we lie still till they come up. They turn out to be two of our own men we had left in camp the preceding morning.

They tell us they had left camp in the early morning to explore the deep bay, seen extending easterly from the lumber shanty on the north shore of White Trout Lake. On arriving near the foot of the bay they had found the end of a winter lumber-road leading in a north-easterly direction. Shouldering the canoe, and following the road for a mile and a half, they had found that it ended on the shore of another lake, when, launching the canoe, steering northward and passing a narrow point, they found a large sheet of water extending apparently for miles to the east, its south shore rising into high hardwood ridges, and the north covered with red and white pine. It is named Lake La Muir. Beautiful hardwood mountains enclose its west shore. Our men had sailed through amongst a cluster of islands past the mouth of a mountain stream finding its way through a gorge between the hills, and had landed by the side of a swamp at the head of another bay in the north-west corner of the lake. Here they found another lumber-road, along which they travelled three-fourths of a mile, mostly through a large spruce swamp, when they struck the most easterly point of Red Pine Lake, and began speculating as to whether it would be better to retrace their way to camp by the route they had come, or endeavour to find the river, by which they could return, when our canoe was espied. As they had brought no lunch with them, the demon Hunger, which seems to be ever hovering round when one is inhaling the healthful, bracing air of those woods and waters, was tormenting them, and they gladly joined us at dinner.

The sun has gone down and darkness set in before our canoes are again launched on the waters of White Trout Lake. But as soon as we get past the little island, and are fairly out on the bosom of the lake, the camp fire, although at

a distance of nearly three miles, is distinctly visible, and we quickly speed across the calm, still waters to the landing. We are soon agreeably engaged in discussing a plate of rich pea-soup and trout with a top-dressing of rice-pudding, which the cook had prepared in expectation of our return.

We indulge in an extra hour's sleep next morning, as the work of the last two days has been unusually hard, and the boys were thoroughly tired out. By eight o'clock everything is packed up, and we are retracing our way to the mouth of Otter Slide Lake Creek. We find it tedious, as well as very laborious, paddling and pushing up the shallow stream, for the water has perceptibly fallen since we descended, and it is drawing towards the close of the second day ere we have crossed the Height of Land and again emerge on the shore of Island Lake. It had been our intention to cross to the foot of it this evening, but a stiff western gale is blowing, and we are impelled to retire a few rods into the woods and pitch camp for the night.

If time permitted, we might steer southerly across a couple of small bays on the east shore, and landing on the east side of a small islet, follow a surveyor's line which we would find running away eastward; in a mile and three-fourths we would make the shore of a pond emptying its waters towards the west, and the creek winding away in a south-west direction, then gradually assuming a more southerly course, increasing in volume, and fed by numerous springs and rivulets, till finally, having increased to the size of a small river, it empties its waters into Lake of Two Rivers on the Madawaska River. Crossing this pond, and passing over a hill about half a mile further on, we would arrive at another body of water named "Hailstorm Lake." Launching out on its waters, and steering eastward for half an hour we would arrive at its outlet, a

stream meandering through a spruce swamp; then slowly working our way down it for a mile and a half, we would cross the east boundary of the township of McLaughlin, and enter the newly-surveyed township of Bower. A little over a mile further we would find it joined by a stream from the north. It is now a good-sized, but sluggish brook, flowing through an open marsh, in many places the water completely covered by the broad leaves of the water lily, and one of the best spots in this whole section of country for duck shooting. After an hour's paddle, rounding the last of its numerous sharp bends, the largest body of water we have yet seen would lie spread out before us, stretching in deep bays away to the north and east, hemmed in by grand, majestic, heavily-timbered mountains. Bending our course easterly along its high south shore, in a little over an hour we would pass into another large bay extending to the south-west, then gliding through a cluster of islands, and steering southerly along the east shore, another large body of water would be seen stretching far to the south-west. Still tracing the east shore, at the end of another mile we would turn suddenly to the north through a neck of deep, swift-flowing water, scarcely three rods wide, and in a couple of minutes more the largest bay of all would be opened to view, stretching away to the north and east. Right ahead on the left a large farm, with substantial log buildings and groups of cattle and horses, would be seen. Landing, we would be informed that we were on the Great Opeongo Lake, and that this is the depot of the lumbering firm of Messrs. F. & M.

Ascending a slight elevation, we would find ourselves on a narrow neck of land, where we could see the magnificent sheet of water stretching far both to the east and west, studded here and there with pine-clad islets literally blue with huckleberries.

We are standing by the side of an old Indian burying-ground, but the destroying hand of the Paleface has defaced, removed, or destroyed all relics that would make it historically interesting. Beside the defaced graves of the aborigines a pine slab marks the last resting-place of a Mr. D., the pioneer of this section, who was killed a few years ago by a bear on the shore of the creek we have just descended. But as time will not permit, we must forego the pleasure of a visit to the Great Opeongo for the present.

Towards the close of the next afternoon we are again breasting the waters of Canoe Lake, heading for the old camp-ground, where we shall spend to-morrow, which will be the Sabbath. Scarcely have the tents been pitched when an object is seen sailing out from behind the north end of the island, and heading for the shore to the west of the inlet. At first sight it is taken for a loon, but as it is moving swiftly and steadily forward, the field-glass is brought to bear, and the sharp nose and long ears of a fine doe are revealed. A canoe is instantly manned, and two of us are off in pursuit. She is well-nigh a mile away, and we will have to strain every muscle to overtake her before she reaches land. We are within sixty rods before our approach is discovered, as we are moving in a line almost at right angles to her course. As soon as we are discovered, however, she dashes away at double her former rate of speed; we must hasten for she is now well in towards the shore, but we now rapidly approach and dash across right in front of her. A couple of minutes more and she would have been in shallow water, when a few bounds would have placed her out of danger and beyond pursuit. She wheels sharply round and heads for another point; but she is now completely at our mercy, and can be guided in whichever direction we choose. After heading

her off a few times, and watching the motions of her graceful, tapering limbs in the water—(the thought of accomplishing her destruction is too deeply seated in our minds for us to take any notice of the large, liquid, soft, pleading eyes)—we steer up behind her till the canoe almost touches her quarters, and discharge a load of No. 3 shot into the back of her head. She floats lifeless by our side. As we look at the finely-shaped, but drooping head and protruding tongue, the blood oozing from the nostrils and dyeing crimson the pure waters of the lake, a feeling of shame comes over us at the cowardly manner in which we have accomplished her destruction. We wonder how persons calling themselves sportsmen can go out day after day and idly lie on the edge of some bay or point listening for the baying of the hound which heralds the approach of the harmless animal fleeing to this her only harbour of refuge, watch the graceful form leap into the water, imagining herself now safe from her bloodthirsty pursuers, watch till she is sufficiently far from shore to preclude the possibility of her return ere he gets within striking distance. He has only to exert his strength for five or ten minutes with the paddle, when the poor dumb brute is helplessly at his mercy — as completely in his power as the fettered sheep is in that of the butcher—and then to call this *sport!* Rare sport, indeed! If this is not pot-hunting, then the word is a misnomer. If the hunter desires real sport, sport where the game will have some chance for life, and where man's intelligence and endurance is pitted against the instinct and endurance of the denizens of the woods, he should dispense with the use of the hounds. Let him shoulder his rifle and go off alone into the woods, train the feet to avoid treading on fallen limbs, and to step lightly over rustling leaves, train the ear to detect the various sounds peculiar

to the woods so as to be able to distinguish the movements of an animal from the creaking of one tree upon another or the rustling of the winds, and train the eye to detect the whisking of a tail, the flop of an ear, or movement of a limb, and the dun form from the surroundin gtimber, the antlered head from an upturned root, and, lastly, train the hand to make a quick and steady shot.

When the hunter has bagged the game by this proper method of hunting, he will feel that he has earned it, and that to track and bring down the wily buck in his native wilds is a feat any huntsman may be proud of. He will find that venison killed in this manner is a very different article from that produced by the carcase of a deer which has been chased at full speed for several hours, until its blood is at fever heat, then suddenly plunged in the ice-cold water of the lake, and slaughtered before the body has had time to cool down to its normal condition.

There is also another method of deer hunting with dogs, which is quite as objectionable as that of killing them in a lake. It is known by the name of "shooting on the runways." Deer have almost invariably some particular spot for crossing a swamp, going over or round a hill, or course for swimming a lake or river. These crossings, where deer are plentiful, frequently assume the form of well-beaten paths, which may be followed for miles, and in many instances a number of them will converge and form one large runway. In the early morning a companion is sent off into the woods with the dogs to start the game, when the other, gun in hand, takes his station at some well-known spot on the runway behind a tree or log. The approach of the deer is heralded by the baying of the hounds, and finally it is seen dashing along at full speed intent only on escaping from its pursuers without pay-

ing any attention to danger ahead. The hunter can so station himself as to be able almost to touch the animal as it rushes past, or, if it is a short distance off, a sudden whistle or shout will bring it to a standstill to look for the new danger, when in either case the hunter has a pot shot. In this case he has not even the labour of a short paddle to get within shooting distance, but has simply to stand still until the affrighted animal rushes into the place of ambush.

If deer were only slaughtered by the still hunter, there would be little necessity for game laws to protect them, and they would not, as they are now, be driven to the outskirts of the settlements, for there is enough of uncleared wild lands in all the northern counties in Ontario—lands unsuited for agricultural purposes—to form excellent game preserves. Were it not for this chasing with dogs, deer would be still as numerous in the settlements as they were before, as they are safer there from their natural enemies, the wolves.

As the slain deer furnishes an abundance of fresh meat for the table, there is no setting of the night line this evening. During the forenoon of the next day an excursion to the old camp-ground on the island reveals the fact that here there is a large quantity of ripe huckleberries, and the cook prepares a large roly-poly with some for supper.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE SOURCE OF THE MADAWASKA—IN A GALE.

ANOTHER bright morning, and ere the sun is two hours above the horizon we have sped swiftly across the calm surface of the lake into the south-east bay, and are trudging with stooping heads across half a mile of a comparatively smooth portage to Smoke Lake. The camp is pitched on its shore, and we shall spend the day in tracing its headlands and bays, and also in having a look at Ragged Lake, which lies only a short distance beyond its southern end.

Smoke Lake lies nearly due north and south, its extreme length being a little over three miles. Immediately to the west of the landing a bay extends for a distance of half a mile to the outlet, which, as we have before observed, empties into Tea Lake. The land around the north end is not very undulating, but about half-way up a hard-wood mountain on the west, and another, almost directly opposite on the east side, towers high over the surrounding country. There are a few small islands, covered with pines and huckleberry bushes, scattered over its surface; and two deep bays directly opposite each other, near the southern end, give the lake the appearance of a large and rudely-shaped cross. It gradually narrows down in the south

into a small, lily-covered bay, where a brawling brook comes tumbling in over a mass of large boulders. This affords another favourite haunt for trout. Ascending a short, rugged portage, a small pond is encountered, on crossing which another five minutes' climb brings us to the shore of Ragged Lake, and we are quickly skimming over its waters. A high pine-capped mountain lies directly a short distance ahead. On emerging from the little bay at the outlet the water is seen extending away to the east, and on approaching the mountain it is found to be an island with a narrow channel between it and the west shore. Passing through this, we wind along the high western shore nearly due south. The lake extends in a number of small bays away to the east. On our right a narrow strip of young poplars, with tall, blackened trunks towering high above them, attest the presence, a few years ago, of a bush fire. On approaching a point on the west side, we pass out of the township of Peck into the township of Livingstone. In a few minutes more the shore turns abruptly to the west, where a broad belt of water extends south to a large tamarack swamp, behind which is a back-ground of lofty pine-clad mountains. Approaching the west end, we turn north through a short narrows, re-entering Peck, and come upon another large sheet of water stretching away to the noth-west, but so numerous are the little capes and islands that only a small part of it is visible at the same time. The sun is getting low before we have completed the circuit of its shores, and had a look at all its varied beauties. By the time we are back to the end of the portage at the outlet darkness has set in.

Should the excursionist wish to visit Hollow Lake and return home by that route, let him steer into the end of the lake east of the high island, and he will there find another

trail, and following it south through a number of smaller lakelets, he can reach that large and picturesque sheet of water in about half a day's travel.

A stiff north wind is now blowing, and, even were it possible to cross the portage in the darkness, it is questionable if we would be able to face the heavy seas that must now be rolling into the head of Smoke Lake. We conclude to remain here for the night, and after getting a big fire in full blaze, make a light supper from the fragments left at lunch time.

Judging from the appearance of the weather, we fear there may be rain during the night, so by the aid of the fire and cedar bark torches a brush tent is soon constructed by the side of a big fallen pine. It will not, by any means, be quite waterproof should there be a heavy fall of rain, but it will at all events partly protect us from the wet, and the abundance of dry limbs scattered within easy reach will enable us to keep a good large fire easily going. After the usual evening pipe, the fire is replenished, and each disposes of himself in the best manner he can for the night.

It is a dark, gloomy morning; heavy banks of dark, leaden-coloured clouds are moving slowly towards the south. As soon as it is sufficiently light enough to enable us to find the trail we are off, and the sun is scarcely up by the time we have reached the foot of the portage.

The wind has moderated considerably, but there is still a heavy swell rolling into the mouth of the creek, which under ordinary circumstances we would not care to face. But impelled by the urgent demand of empty stomachs, and the certainty that they will have to remain in the same unsatisfactory state until camp is reached, we make the attempt; we are confident that the adjacent rapids and deep pools con-

tain unlimited numbers of trout, of which we could soon improvise a rough but substantial breakfast. Before cooking, however, it is necessary they should first be caught, but by some oversight no one of the party has brought either a hook or line. So we launch out at once and gently propel the little vessels across the big rolling waves. The canoes are light, and we ride like corks over the foam-crested swells, shipping only a very small quantity of water, but each succeeding ship drenches both the face and arms of the man in the bow. As the bow rises on the approaching wave the gunwale at her stern is almost on a level with the surface of the water. Our progress is exceedingly slow, for the canoe must have time to rise as she is caught by each succeeding wave; if she has not, she will plunge right into it and must inevitably swamp.

The wind, as is frequently the case at this season of the year, increases in velocity as the sun attains a higher altitude, and ere we are half a mile on the way a fierce gale is blowing. We dare not turn back, for fear of getting swamped in the trough of the sea. Consequently our only safe course is to steer straight ahead, and assist the canoe with the paddles at the proper moment. We soon find that she is completely under control, and that by careful management we can weather the gale. Crouched low down in the bottom, so as to lower the centre of gravity, carefully and steadily we ply the paddles. Away straight ahead is an island towards which we lay our course. As we approach it a creek is seen emptying in at the foot of a small bay on the east shore, while a belt of beaver-grass on the west side marks the inlet of another,—the outlet of a small lake a mile away amongst the hills, from the deep, clear waters of which many a splendid trout has been hauled.

The force of the wind and size of the waves gradually

subside as we draw in under the lee of the island, and reaching a little cove we step on shore. Between the water we have shipped and the spray which has washed over us we are pretty thoroughly drenched. The matches, however, have been kept dry, and in a few minutes a roaring fire of dry red pine limbs is started. One article of clothing is taken off and dried at the fire, then another removed and replaced by the dry one, and this exchanging process is kept up until everything is thoroughly dried; and, were it not for the cravings of hunger, we should feel quite comfortable. Stepping up from the shingly shore to the top of the island, our camp is plain in sight on the north shore. The whole surface of the ground is blue with huckleberries. Overhead the tall, slender trunks of the red pines, with their bushy tops, are playing round like whipstocks in the fierce gale, which by this time is tearing through their midst. All hands are quickly at work in the enjoyment of a very fair substitute for breakfast. How much sweeter the fruit seems to the taste when newly-plucked, and eaten out of the hand, than it does at any other time, no matter what else may be added to it!

Away in the north-east is a deep bay, at the bottom of which a large red object and two smaller ones are seen moving about. An application of the field-glass reveals a doe, feeding on the tender shoots of the young maple, with her two beautifully-spotted, tiny fawns dancing around and over each other, like a couple of lambs, on the yellow sand. All around our islet the angry waters are tossing and tumbling in high, white-crested waves, breaking with a loud continuous roar on the shingly beach, sending great columns of spray high up amongst the trees, in a manner which makes us thankful that we were able to reach this goal before the gale

had risen to such fury, for none of our canoes could live a single minute in that rough sea.

The sky is now perfectly clear, and there is not a single speck of cloud to be seen. The whole day is spent in alternately eating berries, smoking, and sleeping.

Towards evening the wind gradually begins to subside; but it is long after nightfall before the water has sufficiently quieted down to enable us again to put out. The smoke of the fire on the island has betrayed our presence to our friends at the camp, and a huge fire is kept burning as soon as it is dark. By the light of this friendly beacon we guide our course to the camp, where, in the enjoyment of a rich supper of venison steak, fresh trout, and delicious white new-made bread, washed down by deep draughts of fragrant tea, the trouble and dangers of the preceding day and night are entirely forgotten, or made the subject of a jest. In less than an hour after landing all are fast in the arms of Morpheus.

The sun is beaming brightly down from a cloudless sky as we emerge from the tent next morning. The gale of yesterday has completely subsided, and perfect silence reigns. To-day we shall move eastward and endeavour to find the fountain-head of another of the great tributaries of the Ottawa. As is usually the case, but a brief space of time suffices to have everything packed up and loaded in the canoes. The water is as smooth as a sheet of glass as we wend our way round a low, rocky point, and across a deep bay north-east of the camp.

A dozen yards north of a small belt of rushes, which marks the outlet of a small creek, a few blazed trees denote the end of another portage. This will be the longest carry we have yet had, and to guard against a possible thunder-shower, one of the tents is erected to protect our goods while

we are gone with a load. It is well-nigh two miles by the winding path before we shall again be enabled to make use of our canoes. Away, with laden shoulders and stooping heads, we march up the valley of the little creek. We proceed at a good swinging pace, for by this time we have become inured to our work, and are able, not only to take a much heavier pack, but also to carry it much farther without resting than we could when we first started. After about a mile's travel, now on one side of the creek and then on the other, we emerge on a long beaver meadow, extending for nearly half a mile to the east. By our side is an old and dilapidated beaver-dam. Were the beavers still here the long bed of grass before us would be a lake, and would save three-fourths of a mile of portage; but all the industrious little animals have long since been destroyed by the ruthless hand of the trapper, and the decayed dam, the gnawed stumps of the trees on which he fed, and the old beaver-house, are all that now remain to indicate his former presence. The trail leads through the tall grass to a point covered with timber, jutting out from the north side, on reaching which the meadow is seen spreading out northwards to a spruce swamp. Away on the south side a pine-crested mountain, at least three hundred feet high, rears its lofty head against the blue, cloudless sky.

Another quarter of a mile to the east a small lake lies basking in the bright sunlight. The tall grass on its shores, and the mountain in the background, are faithfully mirrored in its deep, clear waters. It is directly in our path. As it will take all day to get the baggage up to this point, and as there is no high ground nearer the water, the tent brought along with us is set up here, the packs undone and stowed away inside. After winding the tump-lines around the shoulders, we retrace

our steps to Smoke Lake, where our cook has a substantial dinner awaiting us. By sunset everything is across the portage, stowed away, and supper over.

As usual, the sun is scarcely well above the horizon before we are astir next morning, and in another hour we are wending our way by the side of its small outlet to the boggy shore of the lake. Suddenly a beautiful otter springs out of an old beaver-house, and with two or three graceful leaps plunges into the water. At a distance of a few rods from the shore his round bullet head shoots above the surface. He surveys us for perhaps half a minute, then as suddenly as he rose he ducks down again, and we see him no more.

A few minutes' paddle enables us to cross the twenty-five chains of lake, where a short time is spent in picking green cranberries, which are growing thickly on the few rods of marsh intervening between the water and the green woods.

Here again a well-cut portage is found extending towards the east, and in less than ten minutes we are standing by the side of a large body of water spreading out towards the east. Ten minutes afterwards we are skimming over its deep, blue waters. The west shore is formed by a number of little bays, while a short distance out are a few small but lovely islands. The course is shaped nearly due east. The south shore is rather low, there being only a few knolls which rise more than a few feet above the surface of the water. The timber is a mixture of nearly all the varieties peculiar to the country. On the north, at a short distance from the water, is a high maple-covered hill. At the distance of about a mile from the west shore a large creek is slowly winding in through a tamarack swamp on the north shore, behind a few small rocky islets. Away to the east the land rises into heavily-wooded mountains. Half a mile from the east end a small

grassy point juts out from the south side nearly opposite a large and heavily-timbered island. A few chains further and the east boundary of Peck is crossed and we enter the township of Canisbay. Rounding a point, still another bay is seen stretching for a quarter of a mile to the south. Its sides are completely covered with fallen timber, leaving only a narrow space of clear water in the middle. At its foot there is an old beaver-dam, and a large creek tumbles over a rocky bed in a south-east direction. We have found another river, for this is the head-waters of the Madawaska. Here is its very fountain-head, and the last portage is the dividing ridge between it and the Muskoka. This is Source Lake, the most westerly of its waters.

A fifteen minutes' tramp brings us to the foot of the portage. It is all either level or down-hill this time, and for most of the distance the noise of the creek is heard as it tumbles down the rocky ledge a few rods to the left. We emerge on its shore at the foot of the rapid, at the head of a beaver meadow almost completely overgrown with alders. The stream is scarcely big enough for one canoe to pass at a time. It is only a short distance to the next portage, and the remainder of the day is spent in alternately pulling and paddling down the narrow creek and carrying our baggage across the rough portages. At the head of each portage is an old and dilapidated beaver-dam. The land rises at a short distance on either side into high ridges, all densely covered with pine, hemlock, and hardwood timber. The black muddy shore of each little pond is literally covered with deer and moose tracks, and one moose is seen at a distance dashing off through the alders, heading for the high dry land.

We finally halt for the night at the foot of the last portage on this part of the stream ere we emerge on the next lake, where there is an old camp-ground. We always prefer pitching camp if possible on an old camping-place, as it saves the trouble of clearing off the ground and there are generally old tent poles lying around that can be utilized.

CHAPTER XVII.

WE FINISH OUR EXPLORATION AND OUR HOLIDAY.

FROM this point, although both very crooked and narrow, the creek is deep enough to enable us to make constant use of the paddle. In fifteen minutes, on emerging from a bed of tall grass, we find ourselves in another lake, which lies away to the west, a short distance into the township of Peck. We keep along its east shore, across the mouths of a few small bays, and a little over half a mile arrive at the outlet, guarding which, at the distance of a few rods, is a small island. Steering slowly through big trunks of flood-wood and large stones for a short distance, we reach a sluggish stream about four rods wide, and with barely water enough in some parts to float us. Its shores are lined with water-lilies and fallen timber, an occasional tall, white trunk extending half-way across, around which we carefully pick our way.

Rounding a bend to the left the stream is seen in the distance widening out into a small lake or pond, while a few rods in front a narrow riband of ferns and beaver-grass spans the creek. This is another old and deserted beaver-dam, which, when in good repair, must have dammed the

water back as far as the foot of the last portage; and this, no doubt, made the small beaver meadow between the end of the portage and the lake. The top of the dam is now between two and three feet above the surface of the water. A narrow cut, large enough to admit a canoe, has been made in it near the centre. Through this we pass, and in a few minutes are in deep, clear water. This is found to be no small pond, but Caché Lake. A lovely birch-clad island lies right before the mouth of the creek, and on its west end is seen a hunter's cabin. The water extends away past a high point on the south side to the south-east, and also north of the island in a north and easterly direction. We steer down the south side of the island. Gradually a large body of water is unfolded to view, stretching away past the east end of the island to the north, and also in two long bays to the south-west, with a bold, rocky, but straight south shore, till it rounds up in a beautiful bay in the south-east.

South of the lake the country is rugged and mountainous, and heavily timbered with pine and hemlock. On getting within three-fourths of a mile of the east shore, we turn to the north-east down a narrow neck of water, between a peninsula on the west and a high mountain on the east, extending in dark granite cliffs to unknown depths beneath the surface of the water. Arriving at the end of this channel, another bay opens out, extending to the east and south, leaving another small peninsula on our right. At the east end of the bay a pile of floodwood denotes the outlet, and as we draw near a roaring of water indicates the presence of a fall or chute. The portage is on the south side of the stream, when, transferring the loads from the canoes to our shoulders, at the end of a quarter of a mile we re-embark in smooth water below the rapids.

The volume of water is now very much larger than above Caché Lake. Gliding smoothly and swiftly down the stream, in a few minutes we are again on the track of the Ottawa lumberman; a cluster of old lumber shanties are passed, and the stumps of large pine which have been cut are thickly studded along the banks: this is the most westerly point to which their operations have extended on the Madawaska River.

At a short distance below the shanties a long, narrow marsh, hemmed in on either side by high, rugged mountains, is entered. The water is beautifully clear, and we glide smoothly, with only an occasional dip of the paddles, along the gently-flowing current. Presently the marsh is seen extending beyond the point of a high mountain to the south. Our stream also takes a southerly turn, and in a few minutes another, more than half its size, empties into it from the south-west; up this we wend our way, and in half an hour arrive at a little rapid, where the cookery is unpacked and dinner eaten.

A portion of our loads, not needed for the night, are cachéd at this point, and carrying over the short and shallow rapid, we continue our route against the stream. At the head of the rapid another long, narrow marsh is entered, and at the end of a mile the high dry land again closes in on the water. The channel of the stream is divided into two parts; that on the west side is a broken and rough chute, with the water dashing down amongst the stones. Across this is the remains of an old, roughly-constructed, but strong dam, built by the lumberers to throw the water into the other channel, which is at present perfectly dry. This one is a smooth, inclined furrow in the granite rock, in shape like a huge trough, its sides and bottom smooth, as if made by a plane.

In a few rods more the mountains again recede on either side of the stream, leaving between them another marsh, through which it winds its devious course. In half an hour the high lands once more close in on the water, and we step on shore at the foot of another stony chute. A short portage brings us to the head, where the remains of another dam are encountered, and we are at the foot of what seems to be a small pond. After embarking, a few strokes of the paddle carries us up to and beyond a point on the south side, when a beautiful sheet of water is seen stretching towards the south. This is Head Lake, and here we conclude to camp for the night. Landing the loads, while our men prepare the tents, we take a paddle round the silent shores, and have a look into the small picturesque bays. This lake is a perfect gem, completely mountain-locked. Away in the south-west a creek, some two or three yards wide, enters, half-way down its southern shore, and a smaller one is rolling in down a mountain-side; while in the extreme east a small marsh, with a narrow valley between the hills, denotes the presence of a third. Each of these has its source in a small lake, or beaver pond, and this is the head of the second stream which forms the nucleus of the waters of the Madawaska. This lake, like all the others, literally teems with trout. Its northern shore has been well-nigh denuded of its pine timber, but on the south the dense primeval forest is still untouched.

We have a lovely spot for our camp, on the point south-west of the dam. The young crescent moon with its lights and shadows gleams brightly through the trees, and the mountain and pines of the north shore are faithfully and beautifully mirrored in the deep clear waters, the perfect silence only broken by the shrill, weird cry of a couple of loons.

By ten o'clock next day we are back to where we dined and left a portion of our loads on the way up. Beyond the forks the stream, which is now beginning to assume the dimensions of a river, pursues its zigzag course through the marsh. At the end of another mile we arrive at the foot of the marsh, and the hard land approaches again to the side of the water. On the south, a few rods from the shore, a perpendicular cliff rears its head for at least one hundred feet skyward, its top crowned with majestic red and white pine, standing in a carpeting of dun-coloured moss, in which one sinks ankle-deep at every step, and the whole surface almost blue with clusters of ripe huckleberries, while from every crevice on the face of the cliff a small pine or cedar, bunch of ground hemlock or small white birch, is maintaining its position, looking healthy and vigorous in spite of the very limited quantity of soil which surrounds its roots.

Here there is another chute and the remains of a timber-dam, and a portage of four or five chains. For the next few miles the stream is an alternation of short rapids and smooth stretches of almost still water enclosed between high mountains, an occasional break in the hills affording egress to a small spring creek, where we can enjoy a drink of ice-cold, crystal water. We pass across many rare pools for trout, but our time is too limited to allow us to indulge in sport. We finally enter a bed of alders beyond which no timber is seen. After rounding a sharp bend and shooting past the last clump, we are suddenly rising and falling on the long steady swell produced by a north-east breeze on the Lake of Two Rivers. Paddling a few rods out into the lake, another stream fully as large as that we have just descended is seen winding in through a bed of rushes about ten chains to the north. It is from these the lake derives its name.

Were we to follow this river a few miles towards the north-west, we would pass numerous little ice-cold rivulets, and finally reach a point where its waters are divided into two streams of equal size, the one winding its way from the north-west, the other from the north-east; each one becoming again subdivided as we proceed, the main branch growing steadily less, and each of the numerous rivulets draining some small gully or swamp, till the last is finally lost beneath the root of some giant cedar or pine, a ledge of rock, or impassable bog. The longest, and that which extends farthest towards the west, has its rise in the small lakelet east of Island Lake.

The south shore of Lake of Two Rivers is a high maple-crested mountain, and, as is usually the case with all the lakes in this section of country, having a narrow fringe of cedar and balsam along the edge of the water. On the north is a forest chiefly of white pine. About half-way down the north shore there is a deserted clearing with a dwelling-house and barn. This was a few years ago the central depot of a large lumbering establishment, the distributing point, whence the outlying camps were supplied. The lake is about two and a half miles long by one wide. Skirting along the south shore, the outlet, a deep swift river flowing in a south-easterly direction, is reached.

We launched our frail canoes on the broad bosom of the Muskoka, and followed its windings, finding it gradually growing smaller and smaller, as we passed one brook and lake after another, till we finally reached its source in Island Lake. From thence we crossed the Height of Land, and tapped the waters of the Petewawa, following its winding course, and gazed on the varied beauties of the lovely lakes which form its source, bidding it adieu, and retracing our steps, when we found it had assumed the dimensions of a large river.

In like manner, we have crossed the watershed between the Muskoka and Madawaska, explored and viewed the various creeks and lakes which form its source, till we have found them uniting together and forming a deep, wide stream, which is performing the double functions of draining the surrounding country of its superabundant water and forming also the highway down which the wealth of timber which is produced by the vast surrounding forest is conveyed to market. For three-quarters of a century it has annually borne upon its bosom a rich freight of valuable timber, which has been manufactured and drawn on to its icy covering during the preceding winter, then delivering it to the mighty Ottawa, to be borne onwards by its waters, a portion of it being manufactured into sawn lumber by the mills along its course, the residue loaded on ocean vessels at the city of Quebec, and from thence conveyed to all quarters of the globe.

As we stand by the shore of the swift-flowing river, the scenes of our early youth are recalled vividly to the mind's eye. Far away, near where its waters mingle with those of the Ottawa, our early youth was passed. We recall many a happy hour spent by the side of the turbulent, long rapids, bathing and fishing in its swift, clear waters, gathering the rich, ripe berries which grew so abundantly along its rugged shores in the early autumn, or tracking the deer in the deep cedar swamps and along the dark rocky gulches during the first snows of winter.

But the track over which we have passed is famous for other scenes than those produced by inanimate nature. Far in the remote ages of the past, those valleys and woods were thickly peopled by the Red Man. And those waters were one of the highways by which the Iroquois of the Ottawa marched to make war on their hereditary enemies, the Hurons. One

party ascending the Madawaska, another the Petewawa, and uniting their forces in Canoe or Tea Lake, together descend the Muskoka and attack the villages scattered along the shores of its lower lakes, and from thence, marching overland, carry destruction and death to the shores of Coucouching and Simcoe; while their defenders were away repelling the attack of other war parties assailing them by the way of French River.

Could the veil in which the unwritten past is enshrouded be withdrawn, scenes of valour, scenes of heroism, and scenes of cruelty and blood would be beheld, equal to any told in the histories of the Old World. But the aborigines of this continent were utterly without the simplest forms of literature, and the history of the tribes has only been preserved in legendary lore handed down from sire to son. They had no Homer to write the history of their sieges, no Ossian to sing of the valour of their chieftains, the fierceness of their combats, or the beauty of their daughters, and there is now no Byron to bewail their fallen greatness.

One almost expects when crossing the narrow portage to meet a line of plumed and painted warriors treading noiselessly with moccasined feet along the winding path, to see them speeding swiftly across the tossing waters of the lakes, or along the silent reaches of the rivers. No cumbersome provision or ammunition train accompanied the army of the red man. The stout elm bow, the glittering tomahawk and scalping-knife were his only weapons, the quiver full of arrows slung behind the shoulder his only ammunition. The forest and water afforded abundance of his frugal food. The naked earth was to him a luxuriant couch, and the foliage of the woods and canopy of heaven an ample covering.

In those shadowy dells the Indians were born, in those they lived, in those they died and were buried. They knew

no other world than their native forests. They hankered after neither wealth nor fame. Their only ambition was to excel in the chase or on the field of battle.

Here the dusky maidens viewed their graceful forms and bathed their shapely limbs in the crystal waters, and entwined their raven tresses with garlands of maple leaf and silvery birch.

Around those pine-clad mountains the buckskin-dressed hunter tracked the lordly moose and elk, or chased them in his light canoe across the still waters of the lakes, and sent the quivering arrow into their vitals.

Beneath those spreading cedars the youthful hunter brought the trophies of the chase, the painted warrior the spoils of battle, and laid them at the door of the wigwam as proofs of their prowess, with which to woo and win their youthful brides. And in those moonlit dells as daring deeds of chivalry were wrought and as tender tales of love told as ever were sung by a Scott or a Burns.

Kind reader, our task is ended. When we began this little book it was our only ambition to attract the attention of lovers of romantic scenery to those unknown wilds, which, although within such easy distance, are almost unknown. But to see this section of country in all its varying beauty, one would have to visit it during the depth of winter, when the forest is clothed in its mantle of white, and the waters of lake and river lie still and hushed beneath their icy covering. Again in the early spring days, when the buds of the gray woods are unfolding into the green leaf, the wimpling burn is a brawling brook, and the calm-flowing waters of the rivers are roaring torrents. And again in the fall of the year, when the green leaves are turned to red and golden yellow, and the ice-coated limbs of the trees are glittering in the bright sunshine.

While we have endeavoured to describe some of its varied beauties, there are still other spots of equal loveliness in those dark woods, which the limited time at our disposal will neither allow us to visit nor illustrate. But at the close of our holiday we return to our labours among our fellow-men, invigorated and strengthened, both in mind and body, and better able to appreciate the beauty and truthfulness of the lines—

> For me kind Nature wakes her genial bowers,
> Nurses each herb and spreads out all her flowers ;
> Annual for me the grape, the rose, renew,
> The juice nectarious, and the balmy dew.
> For me the mine a thousand treasures brings ;
> For me health gushes from a thousand springs ;
> Seas roll to waft me, suns to light me rise,
> My footstool earth, my canopy the skies.

BINDING SECT. JUL 29 1968